



Jerusalem, take off your robe
of mourning and misery;
put on forever the splendor
of glory from God.

BARUCH 5:1



Coming Home

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

Coming home can take place in many varied ways. Sometimes it's at the end of a long day when we come home to where we can be ourselves without any pretensions. Sometimes it's going back to the neighborhood we grew up in, to the old haunts that remind us of the dreams we had and how they now seem tucked in every niche. Sometimes coming home is what happens after many wanderings, after we've sown our oats and harvested little and now have nowhere else to go. That too is a coming home, back to where it all began, back to where we dare to hope that life might begin again.

All of this is how the Hebrew people found themselves coming home to Jerusalem after eighty years of exile, coming back to start anew with the hope that their God would once again be proud of them, back to where they could be as God intended them to be. All of that is what we do when we decide we will try to be the sort of person we'd always hoped to become. It's when we attempt a second effort at making a marriage work, or a job productive, or maybe simply putting the pieces of our lives back in some sort of order. It's all about coming back home to God's dream for us, a kind of second Advent, when God comes into our lives and is born once again. ●

Reflect

Have you wandered too far from the values of your true home? Can you find your way back?

THE CATHOLIC COMMUNITY OF CYCLONE—MARAK

St. Joseph, Cyclone & Sts. Cyril & Methodius, Marak

Pastor: Rev. RanJan Cletus

Mailing address: 20120 FM 485, Burlington, TX 76519.....**Phone** 254-985-2280

Email: cyclone.marak@gmail.com

Website: marakchurch.org

Masses: Cyclone: Saturday 5:30PM & Sunday 8:15AM; Weekdays: Tues., Thurs & Friday: 7AM

Marak: Sundays: 10:15AM and Wednesday 5:30PM(unless otherwise stated)

The Sacraments:

Baptism: On Sundays after Mass. Please contact the pastor to schedule a meeting with him; a preparation program may be needed. Parents must be registered parishioners of St. Joseph, Cyclone or Sts. Cyril & Methodius, Marak.

Confessions: Before Mass on the weekend and anytime by appointment.

Marriage: Couples planning to be married should contact the pastor at least six months in advance before you set the date of the wedding. Completion of required paperwork and a preparation program needed.

DECEMBER 8, 2024 SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Today's Psalm paints a dreamlike scene—a road filled with liberated captives heading home to Zion (Jerusalem), mouths filled with laughter, tongues rejoicing.

It's a glorious picture from Israel's past, a "new exodus," the deliverance from exile in Babylon. It's being recalled in a moment of obvious uncertainty and anxiety. But the psalmist isn't waxing nostalgic.

Remembering "the Lord has done great things" in the past, he is making an act of faith and hope—that God will come to Israel in its present need, that He'll do even greater things in the future.

This is what the Advent readings are all about: We recall God's saving deeds—in the history of Israel and in the coming of Jesus. Our remembrance is meant to stir our faith, to fill us with confidence that, as today's Epistle puts it, "the one who began a good work in [us] will continue to complete it" until He comes again in glory.

Each of us, the Liturgy teaches, is like Israel in her exile—led into captivity by our sinfulness, in need of restoration and conversion by the Word of the Holy One (see [Baruch 5:5](#)). The lessons of salvation history should teach us that, as God again and again delivered Israel, in His mercy He will free us from our attachments to sin if we turn to Him in repentance.

That's the message of John, introduced in today's Gospel as the last of the great prophets (compare [Jeremiah 1:1-4, 11](#)). But John is greater than the prophets (see [Luke 7:27](#)). He's preparing the way not only for a new redemption of Israel but for the salvation of "all flesh" (see also [Acts 28:28](#)).

John quotes Isaiah (40:3) to tell us he's come to build a road home for us, a way out of the wilderness of sin and alienation from God. It's a road we'll follow Jesus down, a journey we'll make, as today's First Reading puts it, "rejoicing that [we're] remembered by God."



Bulletin Information: MARAK: Anna Givens (512-809-9889) marakchurch@yahoo.com

CYCLONE: Nancy Posvar (254-913-2696)

Bulletin deadline : Please call or e-mail info by Wednesday before the weekend!

MINISTRIES FOR DECEMBER 15, 2024

Rosary: Julia Motyka
Lector: KJZT Juniors
Ushers: KJZT Juniors

Eucharistic Minister: Kelly Laurence
Offertory: KJZT Juniors
Servers: Paige, Claire, Kate K.

Sanctuary Light: December 16th-22nd: John S. Marak by Anna Givens

Prayer Chain...Please pray for Anton Vrazel, Martha Hubnik, Brandon Lewis (Cousin to the Tomek Family), Dorothy Vansa, Kay and Ed Moraw, and Ethel Marak as well as those in need in the Book of Prayers. Prayers are powerful as we pray daily for those in need. To be added to the prayer chain:

Please contact Merlene Slavik—254-697-1247 or email—Slavik@farm-market.net

MARAK MASSES—December 8-15, 2024

Date	Time	Mass Intentions
Today—12/8	10:15am	†Milton and Evelyn Hubnik by Janice Johnson †Joe and Elizabeth Vaculin by Laddie and Edith Vaculin †Jennifer Pelzel by Rebecca Barton †Joe and Stefina Vansa by Robert and Debbie Vansa
12/11—Wednesday	5:30 pm	†Stanley Hubnik by Alfred and Bernice Vrazel †Stanley Hubnik by Billy and Mary Ann Seaton †Gene Vaculin by Judy Vaculin
12/15—Sunday	10:15am	†Deceased Members of the Henry Litzman, Sr. and Frank Plachy, Sr. Families †Helen Moriaty by Chester and Margaret Hays †Clement Tomek by KC Council No. 10186 Cyclone/Marak

UPCOMING EVENTS AND INFORMATION

- **COUNCIL RUNOFF:** There will be an election runoff for a position on the Parish Council. Ballots are being handed out today, December 8th. Ballots are due on December 15th for counting.
- **SECOND COLLECTION:** Today's second collection is for the Retired Clergy and Religious.
- **KC MEETING:** December 17th at 7PM.
- **ADVENT PENANCE SERVICE:** Our Advent Penance Service will take place on Wednesday, December 18th at 6:30PM. St. Joseph's in Cyclone will have a service on Tuesday, December 17th at 6:00 PM.
- **CHRISTMAS FLOWERS:** Christmas flower envelopes are available in the foyer of the church for anyone wishing to make memorials or donations to help defray the cost of making our altars beautiful during this special season of the year. Any contribution would be greatly appreciated.
- **CONGRATULATIONS AND WELCOME:** Congratulations to James and Halie Marek as they Baptize and welcome into our faith community, their daughter Finlee James Marek.
- **CHILDREN'S CHOIR AND MANGER PROCESSION:** Practice for the Children's Christmas Choir and Manger Procession will be Sunday, December 22nd following mass. We will have one practice, so please be sure to attend.
- **OFFERTORY ENVELOPES:** Anyone in need of contribution envelopes for 2025, please contact the church secretary.
- **THANKS:** Thank you to everyone that participated in the amazing parish Christmas party last weekend. The food was delicious! Thanks to the Religious Education program teachers and students for the telling of the Nativity Story, the Parish Council for hosting the luncheon, and all special visitors that checked in on us.
- **EIM:** Compliance is required for persons active in most ministries in the diocese. Visit austindiocese.org/eim to learn about compliance policies, how new applicants get started, and how active users maintain compliance. Contact eim@austindiocese.org for further assistance.

12-1: Sunday Offering: \$2,288.00 12-1: Building Fund: \$953.00 12-1: Children's Offering: \$4.00

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY!

Dear Padre,

If Christmas is on December 25, why is the Immaculate Conception on December 8, rather than sometime in March?

The doctrine of the Immaculate Conception asserts that Mary was free of the stain of original sin from the time she was conceived in her mother's womb. Jesus was also free of the stain of original sin and his conception by Mary is referred to as the Incarnation of Christ. Mary's Immaculate Conception is often confused for Christ's Incarnation.

In the Church's liturgical calendar, Mary's conception is celebrated on December 8; her birthday is celebrated exactly nine months later on September 8. Likewise, Christ's conception is celebrated on March 25 on the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord; his birthday is celebrated exactly nine months later on December 25.

Mary's Immaculate Conception was celebrated many centuries before Pope Pius IX defined it as dogma on December 8, 1854: "The doctrine that maintains that the Blessed Virgin Mary in the first instant of her conception, by a unique grace and privilege granted to her by Almighty God, in consideration of the merits of Jesus Christ the Savior of mankind, was preserved free from all stain of original sin, is a doctrine revealed by God and therefore must be firmly and constantly believed by all the faithful" (*Ineffabilis Deus*). In fact, eight years before, in 1846, the bishops of the United States had already adopted the Immaculate Conception as the patronal feast for Catholics in this country.



IMMACULATE CONCEPTION BY PHILIP VERELSTEDE, SEPMANAKOVA, SHUTTERSTOCK

Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR / DearPadre.org

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
December 9 <i>Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i> Gn 3:9-15, 18 Eph 1:3-6, 11-12 Lk 1:26-38	December 10 <i>Advent Weekday</i> Is 40:1-11 Mt 18:12-14	December 11 <i>Advent Weekday</i> Is 40:25-31 Mt 11:28-30	December 12 <i>Our Lady of Guadalupe</i> Zec 2:14-17 or Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab Lk 1:26-38 or Lk 1:39-47	December 13 <i>St. Lucy, Virgin and Martyr</i> Is 48:17-19 Mt 11:16-19	December 14 <i>St. John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor of the Church</i> Sir 48:1-4, 9-11 Mt 17:9a, 10-13	December 15 <i>Third Sunday of Advent</i> Zep 3:14-18a Phil 4:4-7 Lk 3:10-18



A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

By calling us to conversion, John urges us to go "beyond" where we presently are; to go beyond what our instincts tell us.... Let us ask for the grace to believe that with God things really do change, that he will banish our fears, heal our wounds.... Let us ask for the grace of hope....

HOMILY, ATHENS, DECEMBER 5, 2021