

#### THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

Readings This Weekend:

Isaiah 42: 1-4, 6-7 Titus 2:11-14, 3:4-7 Luke 3:15-16, 21-22

Readings Next Weekend:

Isaiah 62:1-5 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 John 2:1-11



In today's Liturgy we celebrate the fact of Jesus' Baptism. In the Gospel we note first the PATTERN of Baptism. Jesus comes to pastor be baptized and John protests. We tend to think of Baptism only in terms of washing away sin. It does do that for us, though

Jesus was not in need of this. Why then does he insist on baptism? Because there is more to baptism than washing: there is also dying and rising. This is the pattern. In baptism by immersion this is especially seen when, for a moment the person goes under the water and passes from sight. This is a symbol of death. But then they arise out of the water in a resurrection to new life. Jesus establishes this pattern for us in baptism and chooses to exhibit it himself to show us the way. St. Paul refers to this pattern of our life when he describes us as: Always carrying around in our body the dying Jesus, so that also the life of Jesus may be revealed in our body (2 Cor 4:10). This is the whole pattern of our life: the paschal mystery. Next notice the **PURCHASE** of Baptism. Jesus goes into the water and gets four things for us: **ACCESS** – for the text says that the heavens are opened; **ANOINTING** – for the text says that the Spirit descended on Jesus; ACKNOWLEDGEMENT- for the Father says to Jesus and through Jesus to us, "This is my beloved Son"; and finally. APPROVAL - for the Father says of him and through him to us, "I am well pleased." Today rejoice in the pattern and purchase of your baptism. The Lord died to give this to us. Let us rejoice.

**FUNERAL:** Kimberly Stewart-Mitchell (1/10)

#### + MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

Sunday, January 12 The Baptism of the Lord 8:00am Sr. Eleanor Marie Wedge, OSP + 9:30am Intentions of Mervin Shello 11:00am Intentions of James Strickland

7:00pm Those killed and injured by acts of violence/terrorism **†** 

Monday, January 13

7:00am Intentions of Corrine Mercer

Tuesday, January 14 7:00am Edna Goolsby † Wednesday, January 15

7:00am Intentions of Beatrice Youngblood

Thursday, January 16

7:00am Elizabeth Hill (B'day) † Friday, January 17 St. Anthony the Abbot

7:00am Elizabeth Kelly † Saturday, January 18 8:00am For the People

4:30pm Joseph R. Young, Sr. +

#### DAILY READINGS FOR THE WEEK

MONDAY: MATT 1:14-20 HEBREWS 1:1-6 MARK 1:21-28 TUESDAY: **HEBREWS 2:5-12 WEDNESDAY:** HEBREWS 2:14-18 Mark 1:29-39 THURSDAY: **HEBREWS 3:7-14** MARK 1:40-45 HEBREWS 4:1-5, 11 Mark 2:1-12 FRIDAY: SATURDAY: HEBREWS 4:12-16 Mark 2:13-17



FAITH DIRECT (Electronic Tithing): We offer electronic tithing through Faith Direct. Here are 3 ways to get info and register:

- Scan the QR code to the right.
- Text "Enroll" to 301-478-8900 to give.
- Go online to faith.direct/DC59 and register. 3. This eGiving service is **FREE**. You can register to have your tithes automatically deducted twice a month or give a one-time gift/donation. Questions? Contact Kim Peaks (kpeaks@hcscchurch.org or 202-546-1885).



### Stay Connected

- Visit our website hcscchurch.org
- Subscribe to Flocknote to receive emails and updates
  - 1. Text **HCSC** to **84576** OR
  - Visit https://hcscchurch.flocknote.com/
- Download the MyParishApp to your mobile phone and turn on notifications to get parish updates
- Follow us on social media



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hcsc church

#### MASS ATTENDANCE January 5, 2024

4:30pm 39 8:00am 80 9:30am 39 11:00am 153 7:00pm 59 Total:

#### THIS WEEK AT THE PARISH

Monday (1/13)

7:15pm Young Adult Bible Study

**Tuesday (1/14)** 

10:30am Seniors Bible Study

Wednesday (1/15)

7:30pm Adult Bible Study (Zoom)

Friday (1/17)

6:00pm Holy Hour w/confession

Saturday (1/18)

10:00am First Communion mtg

+

OUR CHURCH SANCTUARY IS OPEN FROM 8AM—8PM every day for you to come in for private prayer. Consider spending guiet, personal time in the presence of our Lord and pray for healing, strength, courage and for each

other as we face many challenges and struggles throughout our daily lives. All are welcome.



MASS INTENTIONS: It is a spiritual work of mercy to pray for others, both living and deceased. If you would like to offer a Mass in memory of a friend or family, call 202-546-1885 or hcscstaff@hcscchurch.org. The customary stipend is \$10 per intention.

#### **OUR MISSION STATEMENT:**

Holy Comforter-Saint Cyprian Roman Catholic Church, empowered by the Holy Spirit, exists to evangelize and to uphold Christian values by promoting the teachings of the Church in Word, Sacrament and Witness.

#### **OUR VISION STATEMENT:**

A welcoming, embracing and joyful faith family richly rooted in the community today, tomorrow and forever.

#### THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

#### **PARISH LIFE**



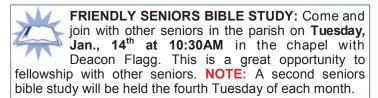
FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD: Today the Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Baptism of Our Lord. This brings to an end the season of Christmas. On this day, the Church recalls Our Lord's second manifestation (or epiphany) which occurred on the occasion of *His baptism in the Jordan*. Jesus descended into the River Jordan to sanctify its waters and to give them the power to beget sons of God. The event

takes on the importance of a second creation in which the entire Trinity intervenes. This **third** manifestation is the miracle at Cana (John 2:1-11).



ADW MLK MASS 2025: All are invited to the annual archdiocesan Mass to commemorate the legacy of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on Sun., January 19<sup>th</sup> at Holy Family Catholic Church (Hillcrest Heights, MD). It begins at 9:30AM with Praise and Worship led by

the Howard University Bison Catholic Campus Ministry Choir followed by Mass at 10AM with His Eminence Wilton Cardinal Gregory as the Principal Celebrant. There is a fellowship gathering at 11:15AM. For more information: contact Karen Fowler (fowlerk@adw.org or 301-853-5347).



Bishop Evelio Menjivar-Ayala will celebrate the **ADW Annual Wedding Anniversary Mass** to honor the Vocation of Marriage on **Sat., Feb. 8, 2025**, 10AM at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. This

Annual Mass is a celebration of the living vocation of all couples who provide a Catholic witness to the beauty of the Sacrament of Matrimony. Couples can attend the Mass and/or receive a certificate from Cardinal Wilton Gregory in honor of their anniversary. **Deadline to submit your names to attend and/or receive a certificate is Jan. 24**<sup>th</sup>. Contact the rectory office at hcscstaff@hcscchurch.org or 202-546-1885 to register. Any couple can attend regardless of anniversary year.

#### **BIBLE STUDIES AT HCSC**



YOUNG ADULT BIBLE STUDY: Mondays at 7:15PM in the rectory w/Msgr. Charles Pope.



FRIENDLY SENIORS BIBLE STUDY: held the second & fourth Tuesday of every month at 10:30AM in the chapel. Deacon JP Flagg is the facilitator.



**WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY:** held every Wednesday via Zoom at 7:15PM w/Msgr. Charles Pope. Sign up at hcscchurch.flocknote.com to receive Zoom link.



This year, our parish will set our focus on the "Biblical Basics of the Greatest Story Ever Told". The Scriptures teach us why and how we exist, what happened to us in Original Sin and How God, in his great mercy, has redeemed us and called us back to Him in newness of life. This will be a whole-parish catechesis, led by our pastor, in three stages. Words from a keynote song titled Just a Little Talk with Jesus helps us to understand the 3 stages:

- i) OUR FALL- I once was lost in Sin,
- ii) OUR REDEPMTION But Jesus took me in,
- iii) OUR GRACE And then a little Light from Heaven Filled my Soul.

A reflection by Msgr. Pope on the bible stories will be in the bulletin every other week. They are also on our website (scan the QR code) or have them emailed via FlockNote along with a video. To sign-up to receive emails/videos, or visit: hcscchurch.flocknote.com



and sign up for Bible Basics! FlockNote is a FREE service!

Yes, Just a little talk with Jesus made me whole!

**EUCHARISTIC ADORATION / HOLY HOUR** is held **EVERY FRIDAY from 6—7PM** in the sanctuary. Gather and reflect in quiet prayer in the presence of the Blessed Sacrament. Confessions heard at this time.



2024 HCSC YEAR-END CONTRIBUTION (TITHING) STATEMENTS—will be prepared only upon request beginning Fri., Feb. 7, 2025. Statements will not be automatically distributed. Contact the rectory office (202-546-1885 or hcscstaff@hcscchurch.org) to request your statement. It can be mailed, emailed or picked up from the rectory. NOTE: only cash donations (submitted in an envelope with your name) and checks payable to Holy Comforter-Saint Cyprian are included in your statement. Your statement will not reflect loose cash donations.

**FAITH DIRECT YEAR-END TITHING STATEMENTS:** Parishioners who tithe electronically through Faith Direct will automatically receive their 2024 year-end giving statement directly from Faith Direct as part of the online giving program.

We are so grateful for our parishioners continual generosity to our parish community. Thank you!

HOLY COMFORTER-SAINT CYPRIAN ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

1357 East Capitol Street, SE, WDC 20003 202.546.1885 ❖ www.hcscchurch.org Rev. Msgr. Charles Pope, Pastor (pastor1@hcscchurch.org) Deacon James P. Flagg II (jpflaggII@gmail.com)

For information on membership, sacraments and funerals contact rectory staff at hcscstaff@hcscchurch.org or (202) 546-1885.

MASS TIMES: Saturday Sunday

Weekdays

8AM & 4:30AM (vigil);

8AM, 9:30AM, 11AM and 7PM; Mon—Fri: 7AM (8AM on holidays)

**RECTORY OFFICE HOURS:** 

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday: 10AM—6PM Thursday, Saturday & Sunday: Closed

### The Greatest Story Ever Told

Basic Biblical Stories and What we Can Learn from Them

### The Early Story of Moses: God is Preparing Me

In the second chapter of Exodus, the Story of Moses begins, and we see how he was prepared by God for the great mission he would one day take up: that of delivering and leading the Jewish people to freedom and toward the Promised Land. But as we shall see, Moses' preparation is anything but uneventful. God must prepare him in a crucible of sorts and lead him to a greater humility prior to his great mission. It is not an easy preparation. Let's look to the purposeful preparation of the man named Moses.

#### **Family situation**

As Exodus opens, we read: Now a man from the house of Levi went and took a wife, a daughter of Levi. The woman conceived and bore a son; and when she saw that he was a goodly child, she hid him three months. And when she could hide him no longer, she took for him a basket made of bulrushes and daubed it with bitumen and pitch; and she put the child in it and placed it among the reeds at the river's brink. And his sister stood at a distance, to know what would be done to him. (Ex 2:1-4)

Thus, we have the dramatic opening of the birth of Moses, born with a death sentence over his head. Pharaoh had ordered the death of every Hebrew boy saying to the midwives, When you are helping the Hebrew women during childbirth on the delivery stool, if you see that the baby is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, let her live (Exodus 1:16). Moses is thus slated to die on account of murderous greed, royal injustice, and the fearful assent of others.

But look again! And see the focus on the women and their initiative in this chapter. Moses' mother, her sister and Pharaoh's daughter are all mentioned as standing in the gap against the injustice of their day. It is interesting that men are not mentioned!

This provides a key insight. In situations of oppression, it is often the weakest who show themselves most powerful, and that, in weakness, power often reaches perfection. Perhaps this is because the weak and powerless have the least to lose and are the least invested in the "way things are." And thus, Scripture says, God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong. (1 Cor 1:27)



Note the strong stock from which Moses comes. His mother and aunt make a daring and risky move and prove themselves resourceful amid a depraved and wicked situation. They will resist evil by making what amounts to a daring raid, a stealthy incursion, into the very source of evil, Pharaoh's own household.

Moses' mother must have informed him of his Hebrew origins at some point for Scripture says elsewhere: By faith Moses, when he had grown up, refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. He chose to be mistreated along with the people of God rather than to enjoy the fleeting pleasures of sin. He regarded disgrace for the sake of Christ as of greater value than the treasures of Egypt. (Heb 11:24-27)

We can imagine his mother, serving as his caretaker, in Pharaoh's palace teaching him: "Son, this is who you really are and don't you forget it. Don't be fooled by all this power and money, by all these trappings. Remember your people and consider that God has saved you for a reason and has a plan for your life.

Yes, even if we must read it between the lines, Moses had a strong and daring mother and family. Let's read on by returning to the infant Moses, floating in the Nile River.

#### **Fantastic Sovereignty**

Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river...When she opened it, she saw the child crying. She took pity on him and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children." Then her Hebrew maidservant said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" And Pharaoh's daughter said to her. "Go." So, the girl went and called the child's own mother. And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child, and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages.".... So, the woman took the child and nursed him. And Pharaoh's daughter named him Moses, for she said, "Because I drew

him out of the water." (see Exodus 2:5-10)

In some ways the action of these women shows both desperation and decisiveness. Floating Moses downstream is quite chancy, but notice the mother and daughter monitor the situation to see what will come and be able to respond to whatever occurs. Hence, they remain actors in the drama not merely hapless victims of the situation.

Note the list of ironies and divine sovereignty we can observe in this short passage:

- Pharaoh's chosen instrument of destruction (the Nile) is the means for saving Moses.
- The mother of Moses saves him by following Pharaoh's order (with a twist). Moses is cast into the water as ordered, but on the wood of a kind of ark or cross.
- A member of Pharaoh's own family undermines his policies and saves the very person who will ultimately defeat Pharaoh.
- Moses' mother gets paid from Pharaoh's own budget to do what she most wants to do (nurture her son).
- Pharaoh's daughter gives
  Moses a name that is
  prophetic: she drew from the
  water, but Moses would draw
  Israel out of the water too!

Yes, God has initiated through these women, a daring raid into the lair of evil, Pharaoh's palace, and placed and agent, a savior there who will be prepared by Pharaoh's own court for its eventual downfall. Indeed, though we know little of these years from the Exodus account, Scripture later tells us, Pharaoh's daughter took him and brought him up as her own son. Moses was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians and was powerful in speech and action. (Acts 7:20-22)

So, Pharaoh was teaching and preparing his own nemesis. He was preparing for his own downfall. You might call this the "fantastic sovereignty" of God.

#### **False Start**

Things are well underway for the deliverance of the Hebrews. But then comes a twist that warns us not to get out ahead of God. The text says, One day, when Moses had grown up, he went out to his people and looked on their burdens; and he saw an Egyptian beating a Hebrew, one of his people. He looked this way and that, and seeing no one, he killed the Egyptian and hid him in the sand. When he went out the next day, behold, two Hebrews were struggling together; and he said to the man that did the wrong, "Why do you strike your fellow?" He answered, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us? Do you mean to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" Then Moses was afraid, and thought, "Surely the thing is known." When Pharaoh heard of it, he sought to kill Moses. But Moses fled from Pharaoh and stayed in the land of Midian; and he sat down by a well. (Ex. 2:11-15)

The problem here is that Moses appoints himself. The Hebrew man may be rude and in the wrong, but he speaks rightly, asking, "Who made you a prince and a judge over us?" And of course, the answer is, no one has. God has not yet called Moses as he will later do. Moses is out ahead of God. Moses tries to save his people without God. This is pride and presumption. This is at the heart of the matter. God will need to work with Moses for forty more years before he is ready!

This may seem strange to us. Moses, at age 40, is in his prime, eloquent, strong, and politically connected! Why wouldn't God call him now? His rash action of killing a man shows that he is *too* strong and too proud for God to use. God seeks the weak and

humble, those who will depend on him. Thus, Moses needs purification and preparation in the desert, where he must now flee. For forty years, God will work with him, and when Moses is finally weak and humble enough, not trusting in his own power, then God will finally call him. For now, he must stand down.

#### **Formative Sojourning**

And thus, Moses flees to the desert where God will purify and prepare him for something he cannot handle right now.

Moses will live humbly. He will have a desert experience. He will learn to shepherd. He will marry and raise a family. He will learn patience and, with age, his own limits.

The paradox of all this is that God seeks us in our humility more than our strength. Without humility we are dangerous, and God cannot use us. Finally, after forty years, when Moses is 80, leaning on a cane, and of stammering speech, God will finally say, "Now I can use you, for now you will rely on my power, not yours."

In all this, God has been silently at work. Moses the deliverer was snatched from the waters, educated and prepared in Pharaoh's own courts, by Pharaoh's finest. Moses has had his pride humbled, and his human strength replaced by divine dependance through a forty-year purification in the desert. And now the deliverer of Israel is finally ready.

We will continue his story in the next flyer, as God calls him. For now, recall the words of an old Gospel song: God is preparing me for something I can't handle right now. He's making me ready...He's providing me with what I need to carry out the next matter in my life. He's maturing, training and tuning me; purging and pruning me for everything that will come in my life.



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8:00am Breakfast

9:00am Keynote Talk

10:00am Holy Mass

12:00pm Departure to March for Life

1:00pm 51st March for Life

MEETING POINT:

Madison Dr. NW & 12th St NW

DEPARTURE POINT:

Union Station to Fort Totten Station

4:00pm Snack and Showers for Guests

**Evening Prayer** 

Dinner & Show

10:30pm Grand Silence

#### RESTORE CONFERENCE

Arrival / Registration

& Breakfast

8:45 am Intro Activities

10:00am Keynote Talk #1 (Hall)

11:15am Holy Mass

12:30pm Lunch - Fogon

After JPII Shrine Departure

3:30pm Group Photo! & Return

3:45pm Keynote Talk #2

4:45pm Snack/Break

5:15pm Adoration

6:00pm Benediction & "Good Night"

6:30pm Dinner & Show

8:00pm Candle-lit Rosary Procession

8:30pm Sign-out

RELIGIOUS FAMILY OF THE INCARNATE WORD

Registration for Restore Conference 2025: <a href="https://www.vocesverbiusa.org/restore.html">https://www.vocesverbiusa.org/restore.html</a>





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HCSC SODALITY

In Memory of

Memory of OTHA JOHN HAMER JR. OTHA JOHN HAMER III "ETERNAL LOVE

Anna, Othalene, Lataunya Betty - wife and mother

In Loving Memory of

The Deceased Jenifers:

Oscar, Mary, Helena, Bay, David,

Baby Sis, Beverly, Frankie, David,

Neal, Kimberly, Cyprian Jr., Jovan

& Very Dear, The Family

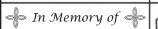
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In Loving Memory of

Serving DC, MD, and VA

**Mattie Barclay** Helene Crutchfield **Edgell Fairfax** Elizabeth Fairfax Clyde Fairfax Sr. Clyde (Guy) Fairfax Jr. The Family



Our Deceased Members



Holy Name Society

In Loving Memory

Austina H. Jones

J. Mother We Love You Always

Willie, Lawrence & Maria

To Our Beloved Kenyon C. Jones Son & Father We'll always love you, Mom, Kids

& Denita



IN LOVING **MEMORY OF** Anthony **Maxwell Smart** (Tony)

The Family

In Memory of Winnie, Ray, Bertie

In Memory of Hump, Will, Phil Henny

In Loving Memory of

**James & Hattie** Nicholson & Norman Williams

♥ From the Family

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