

Readings for the week of December 29, 2024

Sunday:

1 Sm 1:20-22, 24-28/Ps 84:2-3, 5-6, 9-10
(see a)/1 Jn 3:1-2, 21-24/Lk 2:41-52

Monday:

1 Jn 2:12-17/Ps 96:7-8a, 8b-9, 10/
Lk 2:36-40

Tuesday:

1 Jn 2:18-21/Ps 96:1-2, 11-12, 13/Jn 1:1-18

Wednesday:

Nm 6:22-27/Ps 67:2-3,5, 6, 8 (2a)/
Gal 4:4-7/Lk 2:16-21

Thursday:

1 Jn 2:22-28/Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4/
Jn 1:19-28

Friday:

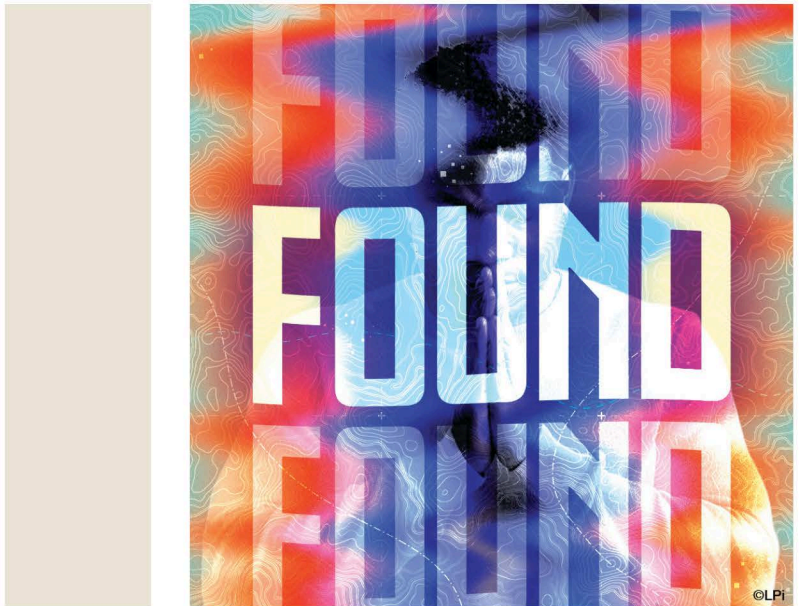
1 Jn 2:29—3:6/Ps 98:1, 3cd-4, 5-6/
Jn 1:29-34

Saturday:

1 Jn 3:7-10/Ps 98:1, 7-8, 9/Jn 1:35-42

Next Sunday:

Is 60:1-6/Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13 (see
11)/Eph 3:2-3a, 5-6/Mt 2:1-12



Gospel Meditation

Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

As a first-time pastor in a parish, I received a phone call one afternoon from a young married couple, “Father, our 2-year-old son drowned in our pool this morning. We are at the hospital. Please help us.” I sped over. The little boy was gone, his body cold, slightly blue, laid out on a bed. His parents were distraught and in shock. For the next few years, I walked with the couple along their difficult and painful road. They openly shared with me how they were often tempted to blame and accuse each other for the loss. And yet, by God’s grace, their love for each grew stronger and deeper as the years went by.

The Holy Family was not without its pain and loss, either. Luke tells us, after losing their twelve-year-old son, Joseph and Mary “after three days found him in the temple area, sitting among the teachers...” (Luke 2:46). We don’t know specifically what those three days were like for them except for what Mary says: **“Your father and I have been looking for you anxiously.”** The three days of his absence foreshadow his death and burial. His finding in the temple is a kind of resurrection for his family. They had to learn, again and again, that their family was becoming a place where death and resurrection was not only accepted but welcomed and celebrated. But surely they deeply felt the dangerous agony of their loss — just like every couple who has lost a child.

What losses in your experience of family still cause you anxiety? In what ways has God’s presence seemingly vanished in your family? Will you keep searching for Jesus? Remember, he will rise and be found. Your family may be suffering, but when he is found, it will be stronger than ever before.

— *Father John Muir*



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(PRACTICING) CATHOLIC

Where is Jesus?

Every mother who has ever lost sight of her child in a crowd, even for a few seconds, knows the panic.

I think of Mary living with that level of anxiety for three straight days. I doubt she slept, but I'm sure Joseph forced her to lie down at night, imploring her to think of her health, to rest while he kept on searching the streets of Jerusalem. I imagine her lying there, eyes open and staring at the ceiling. Mary, full of grace. Mary, spotless of sin. Weeping in the dark, whispering, "Where is he?"

It's an experience that we all have at one point or another. Running through the world, desperate and confused, just trying to find God and failing so miserably that we wonder if He's purposefully eluding us.

If Mary couldn't even find Him, do we stand a chance?

Why didn't Mary think to look in the temple? She had wisdom beyond anyone else who ever lived, at least when it came to Jesus. But I think God purposefully dropped a veil over her reasoning for these three days, so that He could show us it's okay to lose our way.

He isn't eluding us. In fact, He's trying to make it easy. He's staying put, in one place, the very place we should know to look. But the streets of our life are so crowded and loud, so full of distraction.

The Christmas season is about God revealing to us who and what and where He is. He has told us. The question is, have we listened?

— Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Why do we do that?

Catholic Life Explained

Question:

July 26 is the feast of Joachim and Anna. Who are they and what do we know about them?

Answer:

Joachim and Anna are the parents of Mary, the mother of Jesus, yet there is absolutely no biblical reference to them whatsoever. So where do we get their names, and what is their story?

Their names are found in an apocryphal (hidden) gospel known as "The Infancy Gospel of James." Apocryphal, or hidden gospels, consist of accounts of Jesus' life that were ultimately not accepted as inspired works, and thus were not included in the Bible. However, they sometimes captured the Christian imagination, spilling into the devotional dimension of the community.

James' infancy gospel begins with the parents of Mary and their desire for a child. In their prayer and petitions to God, they are heard and given the blessings of a child, whom they named Mary. While we have no idea who Mary's parents really were, the fact that we celebrate the feast of Joachim and Anna indicates that the bond of family love is important in the Christian life.

Long before Grandparents' Day was established, the church had a feast that honored the presumed grandparents of Jesus. While their names are part of non-inspired apocryphal legends, the fact of the Savior's human ancestry is not. Christ, the incarnate Word, dwelt among us in the flesh in a human family. In honoring the grandparents of Jesus we really proclaim our faith in the Incarnation — God becoming human!

Weekly Prayer

Sunday's Readings

First Reading:

"I prayed for this child, and the LORD granted my request. Now I, in turn, give him to the LORD; as long as he lives, he shall be dedicated to the LORD."
(1 Sm 1:27-28)

Psalm:

Blessed are they who dwell in your house, O Lord. (Ps 84)

Second Reading:

Beloved, we are God's children now; what we shall be has not yet been revealed. (1 Jn 3:2)

Gospel:

After three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers. (Lk 2:46)

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Live The Liturgy Inspiration of the Week

For three days, Mary and Joseph search and worry before finding Jesus in the temple. "Didn't you know where I was?" he says to them, in so many words. We, too, look for Jesus. We, too, know where to find him. Let us never forget and never despair.

Observances for the week of December 29, 2024

- Sunday:** The Holy Family
Tuesday: St. Sylvester I, Pope; New Year's Eve
Wednesday: Mary, The Holy Mother of God, New Year's Day, World Day of Peace
Thursday: Sts. Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops and Doctors of the Church
Friday: The Most Holy Name of Jesus
Saturday: St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Religious
Next Sunday: The Epiphany of the Lord



Saint of the week

St. Gianna Beretta Molla (1922-1962) is the first woman doctor and working mom to be canonized. During her last pregnancy a uterine tumor was surgically removed so she could bring her daughter into the world, even at the expense of her own life.

Prayer for Family

Dear God,

Help my family to be holy, too!

Amen.



Not finding [Jesus], they returned to Jerusalem to look for him. After three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the teachers, listening to them and asking them questions, and all who heard him were astounded at his understanding and his answers. - Lk 2:45-47

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Questions of the Week

Invite Parishioners to Reflect and Respond to Scripture

First Reading:

In gratitude to the Lord, Hannah returned the gift of her son, Samuel. Is there a gift from the Lord for which you are particularly grateful?

Second Reading:

As children of God, John teaches us that believers should love one another and believe in the name of Jesus. In addition to faith and love, what else do you think unites us as children of God?

Gospel:

Luke presents an anxious experience that Mary and Joseph had as parents raising the young boy, Jesus. Do you recall a time when your parents were worried or anxious about you?



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THE HOLY FAMILY

“ THE CHARITY WHICH BURNED IN THE HOUSEHOLD AT NAZARETH SHOULD BE AN INSPIRATION FOR EVERY FAMILY. ”

- ST. JOHN XXIII



Blessed are
THEY WHO DWELL
IN YOUR HOUSE.

PSALM 84

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He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them; and his mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus advanced in wisdom and age and favor before God and man. - Lk 2:51-52

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