

Readings for the week of December 31, 2023

Sunday:

Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 or Gn 15:1-6; 21:1-3/Ps
128:1-2, 3, 4-5 or Ps 105:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9/
Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17 or Heb 11:8, 11-12,
17-19/Lk 2:22-40 or 2:22, 39-40

Monday:

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

Tuesday:

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

Wednesday:

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

Thursday:

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

Friday:

1 Jn 3:11-21/Ps 100:1b-2, 3, 4, 5/Jn 1:43-51

Saturday:

1 Jn 5:5-13/Ps 147:12-13, 14-15, 19-20/
Mk 1:7-11 or Lk 3:23-38 or 3:23, 31-34,
36, 38

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



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Gospel Meditation

Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

I remember the first time my older sister asked me if I wanted to hold her newborn son. Terrified, I told her I didn't think it was a good idea. My résumé had nothing to suggest I would be a qualified baby holder. But she warmly told me, "I'll help you hold him." It struck me that she is baby's mother. She is the one who decides who is qualified to hold him. I took him in my arms and soon I began to feel comfortable with that tiny little warm cooing creature in my arms, and soon I no longer feared holding him. Now, twenty-seven nieces and nephews later, holding a newborn child is one of the great joys of my life.

Do we sometimes think that Jesus is given only to the highly qualified, special religious people? In the Gospel of Luke today we hear about the presentation of the Lord in the temple. The newborn son of God is passed around like a baton in a relay race, not guarded like a precious jewel or a breakable china dish. We can see him going from the arms of Mary to Joseph, then to the priest performing the ceremony, then to Simeon the old man, then to Anna the old widow. Each one receiving him and then handing him to the next. A tidal wave of joy and thanksgiving follows wherever he is placed.

Believe me, you are qualified to hold Jesus in your arms. How can I say that with such confidence? Because the mother decides who is qualified. The Blessed Virgin, embodied in the Church, holds him out to you and me. She rejoices to place him in our arms to hold, and to hand him on, too.

— *Father John Muir*

“For my eyes have seen your salvation, which you prepared in the sight of all the peoples, a light for revelation to the Gentiles, and glory for your people Israel.”

- Lk 2:30-32

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Questions of the Week

Invite Parishioners to Reflect and Respond to Scripture

First Reading

Abraham and Sarah relied on their faith in the Lord as they struggled with family matters. When have you needed to rely on faith when it comes to your family?

Second Reading

Hebrews teaches us that at every challenge in his life, Abraham consistently trusted and obeyed God. When have you had to surrender complete trust to God?

Gospel Reading

In their purification ritual in the Jerusalem Temple, Mary and Joseph learn news from Simeon and Anna about their newborn baby, Jesus. In your family, how do you deal with startling or unsettling news?



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“...A LIGHT FOR REVELATION TO THE GENTILES, AND GLORY FOR YOUR PEOPLE ISRAEL...”

THE HOLY FAMILY

PRAY FOR US

Weekly Prayer

Sunday's Readings

First Reading:

"Your own issue shall be your heir."

The Lord took Abram outside and said,

"Look up at the sky and count the stars, if you can. Just so," he added, "shall your descendants be."

(Gn 3:4-5)

Psalm:

The Lord remembers his covenant for ever. (Ps 105)

Second Reading:

By faith he received power to generate, even though he was past the normal age —and Sarah herself was sterile. (Heb 11:11)

Gospel:

The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him. (Lk 2:40)

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Live The Liturgy Inspiration of the Week

God's timing is not always our timing. Sometimes, we have to wait years for the answer to our prayer. Never despair. Remember that God keeps His word.

Observances for the week of December 31, 2023

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



Saint of the week

Venerable Mary Elizabeth Lange was a trailblazing black Catholic who founded the Oblate Sisters of Providence, the first congregation of black religious sisters in the USA. Her faith and perseverance helped break down barriers and create new opportunities for black Catholics.

Prayer

Almighty and Eternal God, You granted Mother Mary Lange extraordinary trust in Your providence. You endow her with humility, courage, holiness, and an extraordinary sense of service to the poor and the sick. You enabled her to fund the Oblate Sisters of Providence and provided educational, social, and spiritual ministry especially to the African American community. Mother Lange's love for all enabled her to see Christ in each person, and the pain of prejudice and racial hatred never blurred that vision.

Deign to raise her to the highest honors of the altar in order that, through her intercession, more souls may come to a deeper understanding and more fervent love of You.

Heavenly Father, glorify Your heart by granting also this favor (state your request) which we ask through the intercession of Your faithful servant, Mother Mary Lange.

Amen.

(Prayer Source: <https://nolacatholic.org/news/black-catholic-history-month-mother-mary-lange#:~:text=Prayer,the%20poor%20and%20the%20sick.>)



When they had fulfilled all the prescriptions of the law of the Lord, they returned to Galilee, to their own town of Nazareth. The child grew and became strong, filled with wisdom; and the favor of God was upon him. - Lk 2:39-40

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