

Saint Rita of Cascia Catholic Church Iglesia Católica Santa Rita de Casia



Clergy

Fr. Oscar Cortés, Pastor

Fr. Manuel G. Gómez, Parochial Vicar

Permanent Deacons

Mr. Ignacio Félix, *Perm. Deacon*

Mr. Rick Martin, *Perm. Deacon*

Mr. Luis Patiño, *Perm. Deacon*

Parish Staff

Sheryl Colwell, *YM/Confirmation*

Teresa Droeske, *School Secretary*

Rae Eigenhauser, *DRE*

Elizabeth Faxon, *School Principal*

LeeAnn Grismer, *Bookkeeper*

Janet Harner, *School Bookkeeper*

Julieta Jacobo, *Evangelization*

Ada Martínez, *RE Secretary*

Gregory McMahon, *Music Director*

Elizabeth Salgado, *Parish Receptionist*

Mariela Soto, *Parish Receptionist*

ADVISORY COUNCIL CHAIRS

Dan Kocunik, *Stewardship Committee*

David Green, *Pastoral Council*

Teodoro Herrera, *Hispanic Committee*

Larry Sexton, *Finance Council*

750 Old Indian Trail,
Aurora, Illinois 60506

☎ 630.892.5918

📠 630.892.6273

www.saintritaofcascia.org

🕒 Mon - Fri, 9:00AM - 5:00PM

FIRST SUNDAY

OF Advent

Watch therefore: you do not know
when the lord of the house is coming,
whether in the evening, or at midnight,
or at cockcrow, or in the morning.

Mark 13:35

PRIMER DOMINGO

3 DE DICIEMBRE DE 2017

DE Adviento

Velen ustedes, pues no saben a qué hora
va a regresar el dueño de la casa:
si al anochecer, a la medianoche,
al canto del gallo, o a la madrugada.

Marcos 13:35

DECEMBER 3, 2017

Upcoming events! - ¡Próximos eventos!

Reconciliation for Advent - Tuesday, December 5th - 7:00 p.m. - Church
Confesiones de Adviento - martes 5 de diciembre - 7:00 p.m. - Iglesia

Immaculate Conception - Friday, December 8th - 6:00 p.m. - Mass
Inmaculada Concepción - Viernes 8 de diciembre - 7:30 p.m. - Español

Protegiendo los Niños de Dios - 10 de diciembre - 3:00 p.m. Centro parroquial

Serenade to Our Lady of Guadalupe - Tuesday, December 12th - 5:00 a.m. - Church
Mañanitas a la Virgen de Guadalupe - martes 12 de diciembre - 5:00 a.m. - Iglesia

Our Lady of Guadalupe for Anglos - December 12th - 7:00 p.m. - Parish Center

Find more information inside.

Pastoral Message

The Collect Prayer for today says: **“Grant your faithful we pray, Almighty God, the resolve to run forth to meet your Christ** with righteous deed at his coming, so that, gathered at his right hand, they may be worthy to possess the heavenly Kingdom.”



What better prayer to begin this time of Advent and prepare ourselves in the best possible way to celebrate the great mystery of Christmas (of course it is worth to clarify that the real Christmas is celebrating the Birth of Christ).

Let's make this prayer a personal resolution. This is going to be our goal for Advent, to do everything possible to be in the grace of God and to celebrate with reverence, love, and respect this liturgical time that we begin today.

Let's start with the right foot. This coming Tuesday, December 5th, we will have our **“Reconciliation for Advent”**. The best preparation is a good confession. Let's take this opportunity for inner healing. Come and invite your family to receive this Grace of God. This is the best Christmas present for the family: a contrite and reconciled heart.

Also remember that next Friday, December 8th is the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. In the morning, we'll have regular mass at 7:30 a.m., and at 9:00 a.m. the school mass; 6:00 p.m. our mass in English and the Spanish mass will take place at 7:30 p.m.

In Christ,

Fr. Oscar Cortés

Mensaje Pastoral

La oración de entrada para la misa de hoy reza, **“Señor, despierta en nosotros el deseo de prepararnos a la venida de Cristo** con la práctica de las obras de misericordia, para que puestos a su derecha el día del juicio, podamos entrar en el Reino de los cielos.”

Qué mejor oración para empezar este tiempo de Adviento y prepararnos de la mejor manera para celebrar el gran misterio de la Navidad, (por supuesto valga la pena aclarar que la verdadera Navidad es celebrar el Nacimiento de Cristo).

Hagamos de esta oración un propósito personal. Esta va a ser nuestra meta de Adviento, hacer todo lo posible para estar en gracia de Dios y celebrar con reverencia, amor y respeto este tiempo litúrgico que empezamos. ‘Señor, despierta en nosotros el deseo de prepararnos bien durante estos días sagrados.’

Vamos a empezar con el pie derecho. Este próximo martes cinco de diciembre vamos a tener nuestro **“Acto Penitencial del Adviento”**. *La mejor preparación es una buena confesión.* Aprovechemos esta oportunidad de sanación interior. Ven e invita a tu familia a recibir esta Gracia de Dios. Este es el mejor regalo de Navidad para la familia: un corazón arrepentido y reconciliado.

También recordemos que el próximo viernes 8 de diciembre es la fiesta de la Inmaculada Concepción. En la mañana tendremos la misa regular a las 7:30 am., a las 9:00 con los niños de la escuela, a las 6:00 p.m. en inglés y la misa en español será a las 7:30 pm.

En Cristo,

Fr. Oscar Cortés

Stewardship of Treasure Report

Weekend of November 18 & 19 2017

Total Offertory	\$10,677.87
EGiving:	\$ 883.67 (incl. mail)
Arise envelopes	\$ 207.00 (incl. mail in & e-giving)
<small>(Atmosphere, Replace/renovate, Infrastructure, Safety/securityEnergy Efficiency)</small>	

Weekend of November 25 & 26 2017

Total Offertory	\$9,037.38
EGiving:	\$ 883.67 (incl. mail)
Thanksgiving	\$ 520.34
Arise envelopes	\$ 173.00 (incl. mail in & e-giving)
<small>(Atmosphere, Replace/renovate, Infrastructure, Safety/securityEnergy Efficiency)</small>	

Use our secure Online Giving.

¡Damos gracias a Dios por sus bendiciones!

18 y 19 de noviembre de 2017

Total Colecta del Domingo:	\$10,677.87
EGiving:	\$ 883.67 (incl. correo)
Sobres Arise:	\$ 207.00 (incluye correo y e-giving)
<small>(atmósfera, reemplazar/renovar, infraestructura, seguridad, eficiencia energética)</small>	

25 y 26 de noviembre de 2017

Total Colecta del Domingo:	\$9,037.38
EGiving:	\$ 883.67 (incl. correo)
Acción de Gracias	\$ 520.34
Sobres Arise:	\$ 173.00 (incluye correo y e-giving)
<small>(atmósfera, reemplazar/renovar, infraestructura, seguridad, eficiencia energética)</small>	

Utilice nuestro sistema de donaciones en Internet.

MASS INTENTIONS/INTENCIONES DE LAS MISAS

Saturday, December 2

- 8:00AM Mass – For the necessities of the Chaidez Cepeda Family
4:30 PM Mass – Living and deceased members of the Kramer, Schaefer, Michels and Cain Families
6:00 PM Misa – ✕ Viviano Pulido

Sunday, December 3

- 8:30AM Mass – Living and deceased members of the Woulfe Family
10:15AM Mass – ✕ Ernesto Vanscoit
12:00PM Misa – ✕ María del Refugio Terrazas
7:00PM Misa – Cumpleaños de Khloe N. Hernández

Monday, December 4

- 7:30AM Mass – All souls in purgatory

Tuesday, December 5

- 7:30AM Mass – ✕ Agnes Rose Frank

Wednesday, December 6

- 7:30AM Mass – The Rolfe & Evans Family
7:00PM Misa – ✕ Alejandro Orozco

Thursday, December 7

- 8:30AM Mass – The Micheli & Mulligan Family

Friday, December 8 - Immaculate Conception

- 7:30AM Mass –
9:00AM Mass – All souls in purgatory
6:00PM Mass –
7:30PM Misa –

Saturday, December 9

- 8:00AM Mass – ✕ Mary Catherine Hansen
4:30 PM Mass – All souls
6:00 PM Misa – ✕ Elvira Salas, ✕ Bulmaro Escamilla

Sunday, December 10

- 8:30AM Mass – ✕ Violet Huberty
10:15AM Mass – ✕ Kieren Sheehy
12:00PM Misa – Todas las benditas almas del purgatorio
7:00PM Misa –

Advent

Advent is the liturgical season of waiting. During the 4 weeks prior to Christmas, we light the candles of our Advent wreaths and put ourselves in the spiritual space of the Israelite people who, through many centuries, waited for the coming of the Messiah. - Bishop Robert Barron

Adviento

El Adviento es una época litúrgica de espera. Durante las 4 semanas previas a la Navidad, encendemos las velas de nuestras coronas de Adviento, y nos situamos en el mismo lugar que el pueblo israelita que, a lo largo de muchos siglos, había estado esperando la llegada del Mesías. - Obispo Robert Barron

EVENTS/EVENTOS

All events must be scheduled through the Parish Office.
No exceptions.

Monday, December 4

- 10:00am Legión de María (Franciscan Room)
7:00pm Legión de María (Augustinian Room)
7:00pm Charismatic Prayer Group (Chapel)
7:00pm Cub Scout Pack (Parish Hall)

Tuesday, December 5

- 9:30am ESL Classes (Parish Center)
7:00pm Grupo de oración (Franciscan Room)
7:00pm Reconciliation for Advent (Church)

Wednesday, December 6

- 9:00am Morning Faith Study (Augustinian Room)
6:30pm Youth Group (Dominican Room)
7:00pm Science Tests Faith Grup (Franciscan Room)
7:00pm Misa (Capilla)

Thursday, December 7

- 6:00pm Knights of Columbus (Parish Hall)
6:30pm Church Cleaning Team #7 (Church)
7:00pm Legión de María (Franciscan Room)
7:00pm Apologetics Study (Augustinian Room)

Friday, December 8

- 7:00pm Grupo de oración (capilla)
7:00pm RCIA (Franciscan Room)

Pray for the Sick/Oremos por los Enfermos



- * Tolentino Rodríguez * Elvira González
* Ruth Ann Pineda * Irma Chávez Gamboa
* Fr. Lou Busemeyer SJ * Kate Novak
* Manuel Jacobo * Mary Cassidy * Deacon
Bruce Waterman * Edna Rolfe * Merrilee
Lubshina * Sergio Campos * Anna Collier * José Armando Torres * Ángel Hernández Hernández * María Hinojosa * Urbano Villasano * María López Rodríguez
* Kim Murthaugh * Josefina García * Janet Martin
* Leopoldo González * Dorothy Gallenbach
* Michael Kelly * Margarita Alegría * Benjamin Silva
* Deacon Norb Szudarski

Save the Date

An Evening with Tim Glemkowski

Tuesday, January 23rd

7:00-8:30pm.

More details to come.

**December is the month dedicated to the Advent and Christmas
Diciembre es el mes dedicado al Adviento y la Navidad**

**Novena
Guadalupana
2017**



Día / Day	Parroquia / Parish	Misa y Novena Mass and Novena
DOM. 3 / SUN	Sagrado Corazon / Sacred Heart	6:00 pm 5:30pm
LUN. 4 / MON	San Nicolas / St. Nicholas	6:30 pm 7:15 pm
MAR. 5 / TUE	St. Nicolas / St. Nicholas	6:30 pm 7:15 pm
MIE. 6 / WED	San Pedro / St Peter (925 Sard Ave.)	6:30 pm 7:15 pm
JUE. 7 / THUR	Ntra. Señora del Buen Consejo / OLGC	6:30 pm 7:15 pm
VIE. 8 / FRI	Sta. Maria / St. Mary	6:00 pm 6:45 pm
SAB. 9 / SAT	Sta. Teresa / St. Therese	6:00 pm 6:45 pm
DOM. 10 / SUN	Sta. Rita / St. Rita	7:00 pm 6:15 pm
LUN. 11 / MON	San Jose (Bilingüe) (St. Joseph- Bilingual)	6:00 PM Rosario viviente Misa después del rosario

Youth Group

Youth Group will be wrapping presents for Rita's Ministry on Wednesday, December 13 at 6:30pm. No experience in wrapping necessary. We will be wrapping at 575 W. Illinois (corner of Illinois and Highland Ave). It is a fun event to help children whose parents are in prison.



Grupo de Jóvenes

El Grupo de Jóvenes estará envolviendo regalos para el Ministerio Rita el miércoles 13 de diciembre a las 6:30 p.m. No es necesario tener experiencia envolviendo regalos. La dirección es 575 W. Illinois Ave. (esquina de Illinois y Highland Ave.) Es un evento divertido para ayudar a los niños cuyos padres están en prisión.

Do you really know what happens at Mass?

Are you a cradle catholic and wonder why you come to mass? Or maybe you want to experience mass on a deeper level. Join us for a 5-week study on The Mass. **It will be starting on Wednesday, Jan 10th at 7:00pm.** For more information please contact, Sheryl Colwell, scolwell@saintritaofcascia.org, or My Parish App.

A BIBLICAL WALK THROUGH
THE MASS



Please mark your calendars for Thursday, December 21st at 6:00 p.m. to help clean St. Rita's church for Christmas.

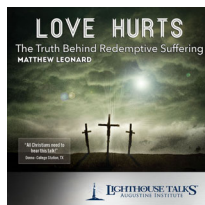


Pongan en su calendario el jueves 21 de diciembre. Ese día a las 6 de la tarde estaremos limpiando la iglesia para navidad.

Featured CD

Love Hurts: The Truth Behind Redemptive Suffering

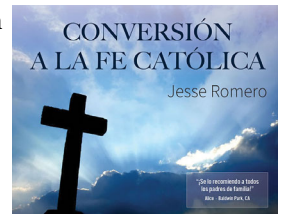
In this presentation, Matthew Leonard focuses on the new idea of love proclaimed by Christ and how it gives meaning to human suffering, penance, and ultimately death. By looking at this issues we'll discover the secret to how we can "Rejoice in the Lord always" just like St. Paul, no matter what happens.



CD de la semana

Conversión a la Fe Católica

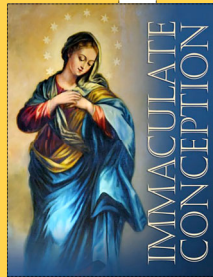
Regresa a la práctica fiel de tu religión al escuchar el testimonio del ex policía Jesse Romero, quien previamente fue campeón de kickbox. ¿Conoces a Católicos que abandonaron su fe al llegar a Estados Unidos? Vamos a reconquistarlos para Cristo en su verdadera religión con la ayuda de esta presentación. Padres que lamentan que su hijos han abandonado la Fe Católica deben llevarse este CD.



The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Holy Day of Obligation
Friday, December 8

7:30 a.m. English
9:00 a.m. English (School Mass)
6:00 p.m. English
7:30 p.m. Spanish



All masses will take place in church

La Imaculada Concepción de María

Día de obligación (precepto)
Viernes 8 de diciembre

7:30 a.m. inglés
9:00 a.m. inglés (misa de la escuela)
6:00 p.m. inglés
7:30 p.m. español

Todas las misas serán en la iglesia

Reconciliation for Advent

Tuesday, December 5th
7:00 p.m.
Church



The season of Advent is a time of preparation for the coming of Christ and the best way to prepare is to go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation to confess our sins and to receive the graces to live holier lives.

Confesiones de Adviento

Martes 5 de diciembre
7:00 p.m.
iglesia

La temporada de Adviento es un tiempo de preparación para la venida de Jesucristo, y la mejor manera de prepararnos es recibiendo el Sacramento de la Reconciliación para confesar nuestros pecados y recibir las gracias para vivir vidas más santas.

Our Lady of Guadalupe for Gringos



Our Lady of Guadalupe celebration on December 12th is a big deal in our parish. **Have you wanted to know what the deal is with Our Lady of Guadalupe and why our Hispanic community adores her year round?** Come to the parish center on December 12 at 7:00pm to celebrate Our Lady of

Guadalupe for Gringos.

Jesus Squad Youth Group

Youth Group will be meeting on Wednesday, December 6th at 6:30pm in the Parish Center. We will be celebrating the Advent and Christmas season.

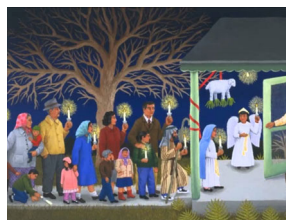
If you are going to the Mission Work Camp, your December payment will be due at this time. Can't wait to see all of you.

Posada

Nuestra Posada en Santa Rita será el sábado 16 de diciembre después de misa de 6:00 p.m.

Tendremos tamales, agüinaldos, atole, chocolate, piñatas y mucho más.

Se aceptan donaciones. Se estarán recolectando las donaciones después de las misas.



DEL 1 AL 11 DE MAYO DE 2018
mayor información
Andrea 773-474-3111
andreaminoyvida@aol.com

Peregrinación a

FATIMA
A 100 AÑOS DE LAS APARICIONES



PARISH INFORMATION

MASS SCHEDULE

Monday – Friday (English).....7:30 AM
Wednesday (Spanish).....7:05 PM
Saturday (English).....8:00 AM & 4:30 PM
Saturday (*Spanish*)6:00 PM
Sunday (English).....8:30 & 10:15 AM
Sunday (*Spanish*).....12:00 & 7:00 PM

Eden Mass (English) every 4th Monday of each month
(September–May) at 2:00pm, at Eden supportive living
311 S Lincolnway St, North Aurora, IL 60542

Reconciliation.....3:00-4:15 PM
Saturday (English & español)

Baptisms - Infants /children

Please contact the parish office 3-4 months in advance to arrange for Baptism 630-892-5918.

Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA): a process for adults to come and ask questions about the Catholic Church to prepare for Baptism or entrance into the church. For more information contact the parish office, 630-892-5918 or attend the next Come and See evening as listed in the bulletin.

Confirmation - 7th grade through junior in HS

Contact Sheryl Colwell at 630-892-5918 x251.

Adult Confirmation/1st Communion (Sacramental Prep)

Attend the next Come and See evening as listed in the bulletin.

Weddings

Minimum of 6 months required for preparation.
Contact the parish office to make an appointment with the priest.

Sick Calls

Please inform the parish office of any sick parishioners as soon as possible so a Priest can visit the hospital or residence immediately.

Religious Education

Contact: Rae Eigenhauser at 630-892-9507.

St. Rita Catholic School

Contact Mrs. Elizabeth Faxon, School Principal at 630-892-0200

Ministry of Evangelization

Adult formation, retreats, small communities.
Contact: Julieta Jacobo at 630-892-6089

St. Vincent de Paul

For emergency assistance, please call 630-892-6186 and leave a message with your contact information.

Parish Registration

Catholics who live within the parish boundaries of St. Rita Catholic Church are encouraged to register.

INFORMACIÓN PARROQUIAL

Horario de las misas

Lunes-viernes (inglés en la capilla) 7:30AM
Miércoles (español en la capilla).....7:00PM
Sábado (inglés en la capilla)8:00AM
Sábado (inglés en la iglesia) 4:30PM
Sábado (español en la iglesia) 6:00PM
Domingo (inglés en la iglesia)8:30, 10:15AM
Domingo (español en la iglesia) 12:00, 7:00PM

Confesiones

Sábado (inglés y español en la iglesia)3:00-4:15 PM

Bautismos

Favor de llamar a la oficina parroquial de 3 a 4 meses antes.
Llame a la oficina parroquial 630-892-5918

Rito de Iniciación Cristiana Para Adultos (RICA): Este es el proceso para adultos que están interesados en la iglesia católica para que vengan y hagan preguntas. Para más información llame a la oficina parroquial, 630-892-5918 o asista a la próxima sesión de Ven y Mira. Esta información está en el boletín.

Confirmación - Muchachos del 7mo al 11vo grado

Contacte a Sheryl Colwell 630-892-5918 x251.

Confirmación/Primera comunión para adultos

Asista a la próxima sesión Ven y Mira. Información en el boletín.

Matrimonios

Necesita 6 meses de preparación matrimonial.
Favor de llamar a la oficina parroquial para hacer una cita con el padre.

Unción de los enfermos

Por favor informe a la oficina parroquial si sabe de algún feligrés enfermo tan pronto como pueda, para que un sacerdote lo visite en su casa / hospital inmediatamente.

Quinceañeras

Llame a la oficina parroquial para más información entre 10 y 12 meses antes de la fecha que desea la misa.

Educación religiosa

Contacte a Rae Eigenhauser al 630-892-9507

Escuela parroquial de Santa Rita

Contacte a la directora Elizabeth Faxon al 630-892-0200.

Ministerio de evangelización

Contacte a Julieta Jacobo al 630-892-6089

San Vicente de Paul

Para recibir ayuda parroquial llame al 630-892-6186 y deje su mensaje con su información.

Registro parroquial

Si usted es católico y vive dentro de los límites parroquiales de Santa Rita, lo invitamos a registrarse.

Protegiendo los Niños de Dios

Si son ministros en Santa Rita y todavía no han tomado el curso Protegiendo los Niños de Dios, se tiene programada una sesión más el **domingo 10 de diciembre a las 3:00 p.m.**

Si tienen preguntas o para inscribirse, favor de llamar a Julieta al teléfono 630-892-6089

Ministries –Weekend of December 9 & 10, 2017
Ministerios– fin de semana del 9 y 10 de diciembre de 2017

	Sat, December 9 4:30 pm English	Sun, December 10 8:30 am English	Sun, December 10 English	Dom 10 de diciembre 12:00 p.m. español	Dom 10 de diciembre 7:00 pm español
EM'S Ministros de Eucaristía	Ann Iglesias - 1 Volunteer - 2 Oanh Mai - 3 Jerry Grimes - 6 LaVerne Taylor - 7 Mary Ellen Bender - 8	Helen Schuerman - 1 Sandra Lorenz - 2 Beatriz Mendoza - 3 Megan Bennett - 6 Jerry Lubshina- 7 Julieta Jacobo - 8	Tom Neu - 1 Edgar González - 2 David Jenkins - 3 Tracey Jenkins- 6 Maria Hoang- 7 Donna Hughes - 8	Martín S. - 1 María V. - 2 Jesús - 3 Elena- 4 Guadalupe- 5 Honorio - 6 Lucía - 6 Reyna - 6	
Lectors Lectores	Roisin Daly - 1 Joni Kramer - 2	Linda Fechner - 1 Rafael Barraza Jr. - 2	Eva Serrano - 1 Sheryl Colwell - 2	Cira Salisbury - 1 Juan Pérez - 2	
Altar Servers Monagillos	Jillian Geronimo Mary Grace Czerak Bianca Geronimo	Adam Rentz Becky Rentz Maya Rabadan	Samantha Poss Roselynn Orrala Madilyn Petryka *	Giselle Galvez Ceci García Barbara Nuñez	

READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Monday, December 4

Is 2:1-5; Ps 122:1-9; Mt 8:5-11

Tuesday, December 5

Is 11:1-10; Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17; Lk 10:21-24

Wednesday, December 6 - Nicholas

Is 25:6-10a; Ps 23:1-6; Mt 15:29-37

Thursday, December 7

Is 26:1-6; Ps 118:1, 8-9, 19-21, 25-27a; Mt 7:21, 24-27

Friday, December 8 - Immaculate Conception

Gn 3:9-15, 20; Ps 98:1-4; Eph 1:3-6, 11-12; Lk 1:26-38

Saturday, December 9 - Juan Diego

Is 30:19-21, 23-26; Ps 147:1-6; Mt 9:35-10:1, 5a, 6-8

Sunday, December 10

Is 40:1-5, 9-11; Ps 85:9-14; 2 Pt 3:8-14; Mk 1:1-8

LECTURAS DE LA SEMANA

Lunes 4 de diciembre

Is 2:1-5; Sal 121:1-9; Mt 8:5-11

Martes 5 de diciembre

Is 11:1-10; Sal 71:2, 7-8, 12-13, 17; Lc 10:21-24

Miércoles 6 de diciembre

Is 25:6-10; Sal 22:1-6; Mt 15:29-37

Jueves 7 de diciembre

Is 26:1-6; Sal 117:1, 8-9, 19-21, 25-27a; Mt 7:21, 24-27

Viernes 8 de diciembre - Inmaculada Concepción

Gn 3:9-15, 20; Sal 97:1-4; Ef 1:3-6, 11-12; Lc 1:26-38

Sábado 9 de diciembre

Is 30:19-21, 23-26; Sal 146:1-6; Mt 9:35-10:1, 6-8

Domingo 10 de diciembre

Is 40:1-5, 9-11; Sal 84:9-14; 2 Pd 3:8-14; Mc 1:1-8

Vocation Corner

If we hear his voice and let ourselves be transformed by him -
Judges 6, 11-24

"The LORD is with you, O champion!" This was the greeting of the messenger of God to Gideon. However, Gideon, a brave man, a warrior, and above all very honest man, replies: "Excuse me? What did you say? if the LORD is with me, why has all this happened to us? Where are his wondrous deeds of which our fathers told us when they said, 'Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt?' For now, the LORD has abandoned us and has delivered us into the power of Midian."

This little conversation between Gideon and the messenger of God reflects the feelings of many of us, especially in moments of despair, even sometimes we wish shout to God: "Where are you? Where are you God when a loved one dies? Where are you God when the innocent suffers? Where are you when injustices are committed? Where are you God when we feel lonely, sick or afflicted?" And perhaps like Gideon we have sometimes been tempted to say: "if God were with us we would not be suffering."

The dialogue between Gideon and the messenger of God does not end there. The messenger replies, "Use the strength you have to go

to save Israel from the power of the Midianites. I am the one who sends you." Gideon is called to deliver his people from the Midianites.

And so, the called to us, continues being the same in our moments of distress: "Use the strength you have", not to save Israel from the Midianites, but to get out of the circumstance of pain and suffering where you are, God is empowering you and sending you to rescue your person and yours. I know you may be thinking of some excuse, just like Gideon did. Just like every vocation finds some excuses. Gideon replied, "Forgive me, my Lord, but how can I save Israel? My family is the poorest of the tribe of Manasseh, and I am the smallest of my father's house." The Lord answered him, "I will be with you and you will defeat all the Midianites as if they were one man." Just like him we always find an excuse to avoid God's call: "But how can I change the world? Let the powerful and the politicians change it, I cannot. I cannot do anything I do not have the means..." and a thousand more excuses. The answer remains the same: God is with us, and we can defeat evil, and transform the world for good, if we hear his voice and let ourselves be transformed by him.

- Fr. Manny Gomez

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