



## Feeling Our Way

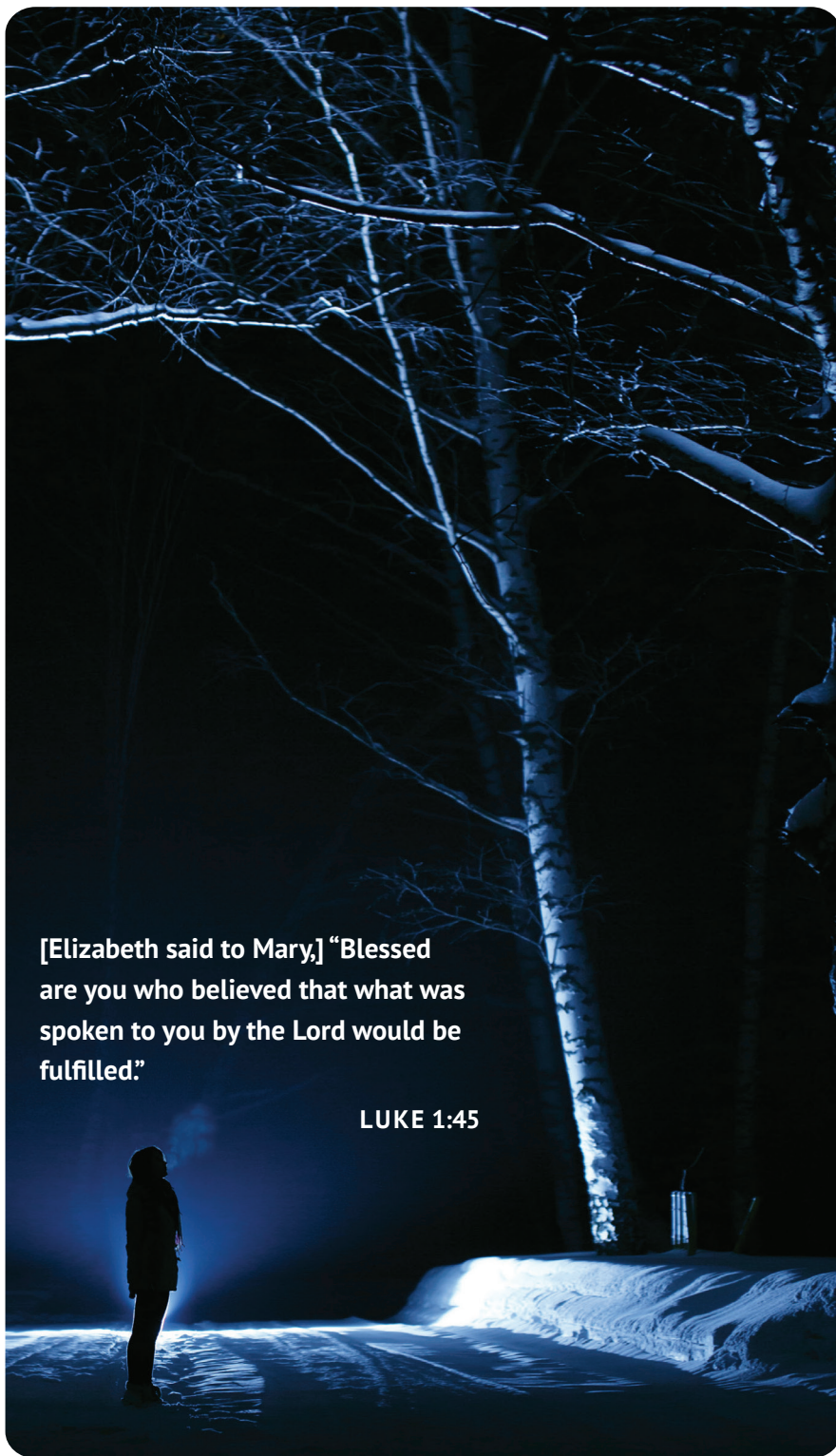
FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

Most of the time we find ourselves backing our way into the will of God, or maybe even feeling our way into it. There are times when the will of God is quite clear: Should I lie or tell the truth? Should I steal or not? Most often, however, the will of God is not so clear. Too often it becomes a question of how to negotiate an aspect of life that's been handed to us, often a reality we cannot escape. It may be an unwanted divorce, or a son or daughter in a questionable relationship, or an illness that dismantles one's life plans. On the one hand, it is not as if God hands out scripts that we are expected to live by. On the other hand, God is part of all that unfolds. Somewhere in the midst of that is the will of God, which is another way of saying somehow you and I need to negotiate what we never chose, but is now served up by life. Or is it served up by God? Or by our own doing? Or all of that? That's what I mean when I say we feel our way into the will of God.

It is what Jesus sorted out in the desert when he was tempted, "I come to do your will, O God." It is Elizabeth's story of an unexpected pregnancy in her old age. It is Mary saying "Yes" to an uncharted path. Living God's will seems mostly to be a sorting process. ●

### Reflect

**Have you responded with a whole-hearted "Yes" to God's will for you?**



[Elizabeth said to Mary,] "Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled."

LUKE 1:45



### ST. MICHAEL'S PARISH

53 South Road, Paget PG 03 | P.O. Box HM 727, Hamilton HM CX

Pastor: Reverend Joseph F. H. Morley, Vicar General • Cell: 705 0236

Email: [stmichaelsbermuda@gmail.com](mailto:stmichaelsbermuda@gmail.com)

Weekend Masses: Vigil: 5:00pm, Sunday: 10:15am

Baptisms: by appointment 3 weeks in advance

Weddings: by appointment 6 months in advance

[www.facebook.com/stmichaelpaget](https://www.facebook.com/stmichaelpaget) & "LIKE" us | Diocesan Webpage: [www.romancatholicbermuda.bm](http://www.romancatholicbermuda.bm)

#### Parish Administrator:

Karen Marsh  
email: [karenmarsh.bda@gmail.com](mailto:karenmarsh.bda@gmail.com)  
(c) 799 0842

#### Pastoral Council Finance Chair:

Reenu Reji  
email: [reenuzj87@gmail.com](mailto:reenuzj87@gmail.com)  
(c) 518 3087

#### Pastoral Council CCD Coordinator:

Patricia Carreiro  
email: [pcarreiro1976@gmail.com](mailto:pcarreiro1976@gmail.com)  
(c) 737 1047



# Mass Schedule & Intentions

We welcome our parishioners and visitors who have come to St. Michael's to worship this weekend. May you be blessed by your presence here today.

## MINISTRIES...

### DECEMBER 21/22nd - THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

5:00PM Lector: Laura DeFrias EM: Kathy Anderson  
10:15AM Lector: Cherry Ramdass EM: Joyce Lee  
Collection: Pat Robinson & Karen Marsh

### DECEMBER 28/29th - THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH

5:00PM Lector: Kathy Anderson EM: Peter Marsh  
10:15AM Lector: Pat Robinson EM: Madelena Almeida  
Collection: Karen Marsh

## MASS INTENTIONS...

### DECEMBER 21/22nd - THE FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

5:00PM Adelina & Jose DeFrias ++  
Mary & Benjamin Botelho ++  
10:15AM LaVerne Lau +

### DECEMBER 28/29th - THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY & JOSEPH

ALL THOSE REMEMBERED IN OUR CHRISTMAS  
FLOWER MEMORIALS

You are welcome to attend Morning Masses at

St. Theresa's - 7:30AM Mon.-Fri.

St. Anthony's - 8:00AM Tues.-Fri. | St. Patrick's - 8:00AM Mon.-Fri..

### ST. THERESA'S Daily Mass - 7:30am



December 14/15th: Collection: \$688.00

Votives: \$11.00 Poor Box (SVdP): \$8.00

2nd Collection for Maintenance: \$141.00

Christmas Flower Memorials to date: \$1,230.00

### THANK YOU FOR YOUR STEWARDSHIP

ELECTRONIC CONTRIBUTIONS CAN BE MADE ONLINE

to St. Michael's Church's

BNTB Account # 2000 6060 081824 100.

YOUR Weekly, monthly or quarterly transaction is appreciated.

When making your online transaction, be sure to include your name and "collection" as your memo on your banking transaction.

## 5 WAYS TO PREPARE YOUR HEART THIS ADVENT

- 1. Prepare room at the Inn**  
Make room in your heart for Jesus
- 2. Clean out the cobwebs**  
After an Examination of Conscience, go to Confession
- 3. Hang new curtains**  
"decorate" your heart with joy and hope.
- 4. Get out the fine china and set the table**  
Let your attitude be one of enthusiastic expectation.
- 5. Open the front door and wait**  
Wait for Christ's arrival silently and in a spirit of prayer



## Bishop's Corner...



Dear Fellow Catholics,

For my Christmas greeting this year I would like to express it using the words in a contemporary Polish carol "A Carol for those Absent" which also appeared in English on a Cliff Richard album. To date, it is the only Polish carol to have been sung on an album by a foreign performer.

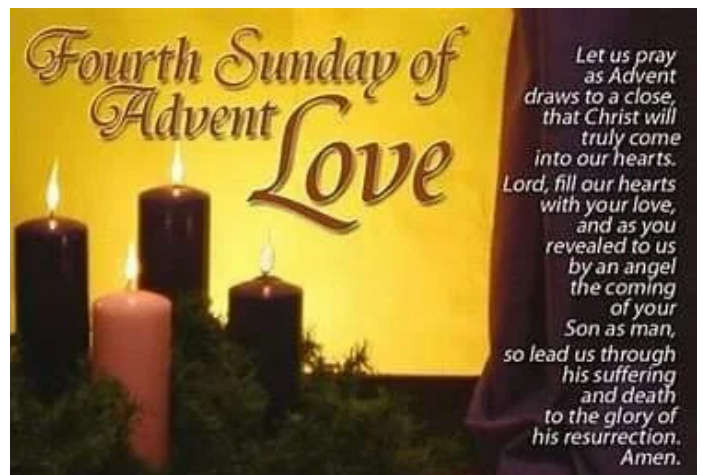
*If you're still and close your eyes  
You can see beyond the shadows  
If the light within your guise  
Try to believe and hope this Christmas  
As one soul disappears  
The laughter fades into the distance  
Please help us bury our tears  
And forget that fate is burning*

*I will not give into the fear  
That you're gone and lost forever  
Give me strength to know that you're near  
And to feel your love surround me  
Give me the faith to know  
That I can reach beyond the shadows  
As the seeds begin to grow  
I will believe in love this Christmas*

*Come to us, give us hope through our sorrow  
Fill our lives and our dreams  
With believe in tomorrow  
Let us live and forget all our emptiness  
Let us laugh like children  
Who believe in life this Christmas*

A hopeful, blessed and loving Christmas to all of you, to all of us...

+ Wes Jurewicz  
Bishop Wes



## Pastor's Point

Dear Parishioners,

The prophet Micah speaks God's Word about a ruler who is both shepherd and a majestic name, bringing peace and greatness. The catch is that He will come forth from tiny Bethlehem (in Israel - the place of God's chosen people), unexpected in every way.

The guiding hand of God, the psalmist proclaims, is always at work for the good of creation, often despite human plans. The New Testament readings further articulate God's will to work in the world, often beyond the understanding of human expectation. The passage from Hebrews puts forth the atoning sacrifice of Jesus' body in just this manner. Keeping a ritual is not enough if it is empty of heartfelt desire for change and authenticity. This is as true today as it was in the first century. God's gift of Jesus, Christ and Son, to the world in His person and ministry, as well as his atoning sacrifice, was far beyond what the people expected but was precisely what the world so desperately needed.

Luke's Gospel presents the encounter between two faithful women who show themselves open to God working both in the world and in their lives in just such profoundly unexpected ways. As they come together in support of one another, they realise the depth and breath of God's plan and how they are called beyond both their comfort and society's role for them.

What plan or plans do you think God has for you here and now? Remember - Jesus is the reason for the season.



God bless,  
Fr. Joe, (Acting) Pastor & Vicar General DOHB

## Dear Padre,

### *Where does the Hail Mary prayer come from?*

The Hail Mary owes its origin to the rosary. The traditional story of the rosary was that Mary herself appeared to St. Dominic in the twelfth century and gave him the rosary with the promise that if he spread devotion to the rosary, his religious order would flourish. In the twelfth century, religious orders recited together the 150 psalms as a way to mark the hours of the day and the days of the week. In order to pray the psalms, though, people had to know how to read. People who didn't know how to read wanted to share in the practice, so the rosary, or praying on beads, began as a parallel prayer practice. It was a way that illiterate people could remember the Lord and his Mother throughout the day.

The first rosaries consisted of a string of 150 beads, and, much as we do now, a person would pass over each bead after saying a prayer, usually the Our Father. Later, people added the Archangel Gabriel's greeting—"Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee"—and later still, Elizabeth's prayer we hear in today's Gospel—"Blessed art thou among women." Finally this prayer was added in the sixteenth century: "Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death." ●

*The Redemptorists / DearPadre.org*



IMMACULATE / SHUTTERSTOCK



YARA NARDI / CNS

### A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

*Do I move forward with hope...? We can also ask for...the grace of a healthy sense of humor: it does so much good.... The first act of charity we can do for our neighbors is to offer them a serene and smiling face. It is bringing the joy of Jesus to them, as Mary did with Elizabeth.*

ANGELUS, ROME, DECEMBER 19, 2021

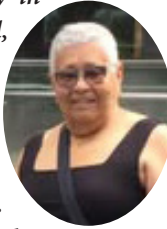
## What is Happening in Our Diocese?

### Rest In Peace La Verne

On Thursday morning, I attended the home of our parishioner, LaVerne Lau. LaVerne had passed away peacefully in her sleep that morning. LaVerne was a dedicated, committed and faithful Catholic. She was in fact, a convert to the Catholic religion and a more dedicated Catholic would be difficult to find. Her family have stated that her funeral service will take place in January at St Theresa's Cathedral, in Hamilton.

La Verne lived her faith and had enumerable friends and acquaintances, thus the need to have her farewell Mass at St Theresa's. Details of the funeral will be forthcoming from the Family.

Rest in Peace LaVerne, you will be missed. Life has changed not ended. Please keep her family and friends in your prayers.



#### St. MICHAEL'S



##### Joining us for Christmas Season

Father Michal Kruszewski, CR is a Polish native who was ordained to the priesthood in 2012. He is currently studying canon law at St. Paul's University in Ottawa, Canada. **Welcome Fr. Michal.**

- Emmaus Bible Study - TUESDAYS 3:00pm -4:30pm.
- St. Charles 'Going Deeper', Bible Study. THURSDAYS 3:00-4:30pm. **NO BIBLE STUDIES during December. Classes will resume in January.**

#### St. THERESA'S

- Daily Mass is celebrated at 7:30am and WEDNESDAYS, THURSDAYS and FRIDAYS at 12:10pm.

#### St. ANTHONY'S

- Daily Mass is celebrated at 8:15am

#### St. PATRICK'S

- The Rosary is recited every, WEDNESDAY at 10:00am.
- There will be NO 6pm PORTUGUESE Mass, on WEDNESDAY, December 25th and January 1st. The Mass and Rosary will resume Wednesday, January 8th at 7:00pm.
- Adoration at St. Patrick's on Thursdays during winter months will take place at 6pm. .
- A mass in Tagalog takes place on, THE SECOND FRIDAY of the month at 7:00pm.

#### St. JOSEPH'S

- A Filipino mass is celebrated every, THIRD SATURDAY OF THE MONTH at 11:00am.

#### STELLA MARIS

- A Filipino mass is celebrated on the LAST Wednesday OF THE MONTH at 7:00pm

**St. THERESA'S GIFT SHOP** is open, TUESDAYS and SATURDAYS 10:00am-2:00pm.

#### REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR FOOD DRIVE

Reverse Advent Calendar Food Drive UPDATE0: Just a reminder that food drive boxes should be dropped off at any of our Catholic churches over the next two weekends, December 28/29 or January 4/5, before or after Mass. Alternatively, boxes can be dropped off at St. Patrick's Church Hall on Saturday, December 28 between 10:00am and 11:00am. Please contact Karen Marsh at the Parish email or 799 0842 or Elaine Kelly at 236-4613 or ekelly@ibl.bm

**ST.THERSA'S PIZZA DINNER BINGO:** There will be a Pizza, Salad and Ice-cream Dinner Bingo, served by Bella Vista Restaurant in St. Theresa's Hall on **Friday, 10th of January 2025**, at 6:00pm. Tickets will be available from the 1st of January in the Parish Office and in the sacristy; \$25 Adults, \$15 Children under 12.

## Word of Life:

"O Blessed Mother, at the angel's word you went in haste to the aid of your cousin Elizabeth. Although pregnant yourself, you placed her needs before your own. By your example of radical solidarity, teach us to reverence and protect those in need, without conditions or expectations... Obtain for us the grace to bring Christ to any expectant mother who is alone and afraid."

USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities

Prayer for Radical Solidarity ([www.respectlife.org/prayer-for-radical-solidarity](http://www.respectlife.org/prayer-for-radical-solidarity))

### CHRISTMAS FLOWER MEMORIALS

**The Deadline for listing in the Christmas Bulletin is THIS Sunday, DECEMBER 22ND**  
**All names will be listed in the Christmas Bulletin and remembered during the Octave of Christmas.**

The flower memorial envelopes are available OR you can donate on line sending a confirmation and the names of those you wish remembered to email: [stmichaelsbermuda@gmail.com](mailto:stmichaelsbermuda@gmail.com)

THIS Sunday is the Deadline



### Christmas Mass Schedule 2024

#### TUESDAY, DECEMBER 24TH - CHRISTMAS EVE

Christmas Family Liturgy: 6:00PM Mass - Fr. Joe

#### WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25TH - CHRISTMAS DAY

10:15AM Mass - Bishop Wes

#### THE HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28TH

VIGIL 5:00PM MASS - Fr. Michael

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 29TH 10:15AM - Fr. Michael

#### THE SOLEMNITY OF MARY THE MOTHER OF GOD

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 1ST

NEW YEAR'S DAY MASSES

will be celebrated at **St. Joseph's at 9:30am** and

**St. Anthony's at 11:30am**

**ALL ARE WELCOME, PLEASE COME JOIN US!**

# Our Sunday Readings

## From the Womb

MICAH 5:1-4a  
PSALM 80:2-3,15-16,18-19  
HEBREWS 10:5-10  
LUKE 1:39-45

### **MICAH 5:1-4a**

#### **Reading closely**

1. What all does this passage promise?
2. How do you envision the coming the ruler?
3. How will the ruler act?
4. How does this promise go beyond what Israel had ever experienced?
5. How might the inhabitants of Bethlehem have responded to this?
6. How might people throughout Israel have responded?

#### **Living the word**

7. Name people from humble backgrounds who did admirable and amazing things.
8. How are humility, greatness, and peace intertwined in this passage?
9. How can you help bring about peace?

### **THE FIRST READING**

#### ***In days to come***

Micah warned the Israelites that God would severely punish them for their sins. This punishment unfolded when first the northern part of Israel was destroyed and then, years later, the southern part. This passage looks beyond all this devastation to a time of restoration.

### ***Bethlehem-Ephrathah***

*Ephrathah* is the name of a woman mentioned in 1 Chronicles 2:24. Some of her descendants settled in and around Bethlehem, a village just south of Jerusalem.

Bethlehem was the birth place of David, one of Israel's most successful and devout rulers. God promised David that his descendants would rule over Israel forever (2 Samuel 7). Micah thus elevates the village where David was born as he prophesies about a ruler to come.

### ***Reigning peace***

Despite his humble origins, the future ruler of Israel will establish the peace that has long eluded God's people. God will strengthen him and ensure that he brings peace not only to his own people, but to the whole world.

Micah's prophecy contrasts the humility and success of this ruler with other Israelite leaders whose wealth and power leads them into sin.

**LUKE 1:39-45****Reading closely**

1. Imagine you're Mary.
  - a. Why are you going to visit Elizabeth?
  - b. What are you thinking about as you travel?
  - c. What all do you feel?
  - d. How do you react to all that Elizabeth says?
  - e. What do you say and do in reply?
2. Imagine you're Elizabeth.
  - a. How did you react when you discovered you were pregnant?
  - b. What are you doing before Mary's arrival?
  - c. What's your first reaction when your infant *leaps in your womb*?
  - d. How would you describe God's spirit working within you?
  - e. How well do you understand what you proclaim to Mary?
3. What else do you imagine about this moment?
4. What all might Zechariah be thinking and feeling?

**Living the word**

5. Do you find it easy or hard to maintain a spirit of joy for the gospel?
6. What about God or God's work in the world startles or surprises you?
7. Whom would you call *blessed* and why?

**THE GOSPEL READING****Pregnancies old and new**

When Elizabeth's husband Zechariah learned that his wife would conceive a child, he didn't believe it, despite stories from Israel's past in which women conceived after menopause. These stories include Abraham and Sarah, Manoah and his wife (Judges 13:2f), and Hannah and Elkanah (1 Samuel 1:1f).

By contrast, Mary believes, though hesitantly, that she'll conceive without having had sex, circumstances for which there was no precedent in Jewish tradition.

The circumstances of Jesus' unique and startling conception point ahead to the new era that Jesus will bring about. During this new era God's spirit is graciously poured out on the world.

**Filled with the Spirit**

Luke includes more references to the Spirit during Jesus' public ministry than the other Gospel-writers. Here the Spirit is already at work in the unborn John the Baptist, as foretold in 1:15: *He will be filled with the holy Spirit even from his mother's womb*. The Spirit inspires Elizabeth both to declare that Mary has great faith and to prophesy about Jesus' greatness.

**Motherhood**

Having children was a significant way in which Jewish women contributed to their religious heritage. Mothers of important or powerful sons were regarded as having been favored by God; whereas women who couldn't conceive were often looked upon as having been rejected (1:24-25).

By calling Mary *the mother of my Lord*, Elizabeth acknowledges the greatness of Mary's child and by extension, of Mary herself. This is the first reason Mary is *blessed*: she bears an important child.

**First disciple**

Elizabeth also declares Mary blessed because Mary believed what Gabriel told her (1:38). Mary is the first person in Luke's Gospel to accept the new era that is beginning.

Mary's response also points ahead to Jesus' statement that *those who hear the word of God and observe it are blessed* (11:27-28). Mary is blessed both as Jesus' mother and as someone who has heard and kept God's word.

**PRAYER**

*Alternate Prayer for the Fourth Sunday of Advent  
(Roman Missal, 1985)*

Father, all-powerful God,  
your eternal Word took flesh on our earth when  
the Virgin Mary placed her life at the service of  
your plan.

Lift our minds in watchful hope to hear the voice  
which announces his glory,  
and open our minds to receive the Spirit  
who prepares us for his coming.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.