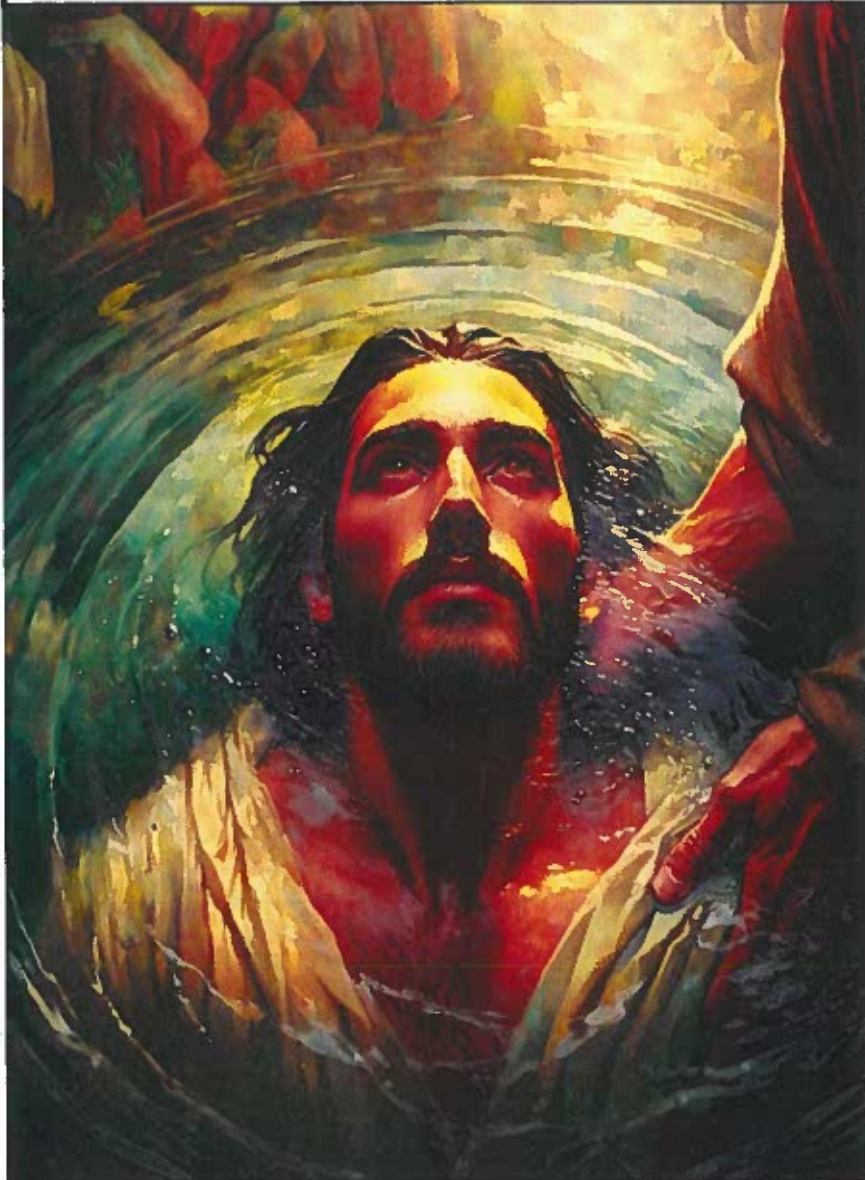


THE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF SAINT GERARD MAJELLA
THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD **JANUARY 12, 2024**



I HAVE COME AS A LIGHT TO SHINE IN
THIS DARK WORLD, SO THAT ALL WHO
PUT THEIR TRUST IN ME WILL NO
LONGER REMAIN IN THE DARK.
JOHN 12:46

MASS SCHEDULE
Tuesday & Thursday 9:00 AM
Saturday 4:30 PM
Sunday 9:00 & 11:00 AM

ADORATION
Friday 9:00 am - Noon

RECONCILIATION:
Saturday 3:45 pm - 4:15 pm
Also, by Appointment

PARISH OFFICE HOURS
Monday-Thursday, 9:30am — 4:30pm

PASTOR: FR. BRIAN BUFFORD
pastor@saintgerardmajella.net

DEACON: TIM SCHLUETER
502-807-3230

Secretary: DIANNE DAVIS
sgmsecretary3049@gmail.com

Administrative Assistant:
DIANE RIZZO

CHURCH WEBSITE:
www.saintgerardmajella.net

CHURCH ADDRESS:
3049 LAFAYETTE ROAD
FORT OGLETHORPE, GA 30742
Phone: 706-861-9410
Sacramental Emergency:
706-401-4175

From the Pastor's Desk

Our celebration of Jesus' birth has ended and as we begin Ordinary Time this week, we prepare ourselves with the remembrance of Jesus' baptism. Jesus' baptism reminds us that the ordinary life of the Church is centered on two things: covenant and mission. If we lose sight of either one of these two fundamental aspects of our identity as a Church, then we lose everything.

Jesus initiates His saving mission by receiving baptism for sins. He's not sinful – John the Baptist knows this, which is why he objects at first – but Jesus Himself assumes the weight of the human condition of sin. He puts Himself inside of it to set in motion the transformation of human desire. And a voice is heard from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

We now live in a new covenantal relationship with God. The baptism Jesus received is something we receive as our initiation into the new covenant. Jesus' death and resurrection are something we celebrate every week in the Eucharist to renew our commitment to this covenant.

In this covenant we also have a mission; we are part of the Church, the foundation of the new humanity. The Church is the Body of Christ acting in the world and each of us is called to play our part in carrying out the mission of the Church. The history of salvation alerts us to the possibility that we could abandon our mission just as Israel did. We have to be alert, and we have to always renew our commitment and always ask ourselves if we are engaged in the mission.

So as we begin Ordinary Time, we remember the beginning of Jesus' mission, we remember what is essential to our mission. This year, may we have the courage to live our covenant with the Lord more deeply and may we have the courage to undergo a true missionary transformation.

Peace,

Fr. Brian

WEEK AT A GLANCE

SATURDAY, JANUARY 11,

4:30 PM

SERVER:

Richard Ring

LECTORS:

Stephanie Kowalewski

Joseph Kowalewski

EMs TBD

USHERS:

Don Hays

Kieron Gleeson

SUNDAY, JAN. 12, 9 AM

SANDRA BURROWS+

(Gloria Kelley)

SERVERS, LECTORS &

EMs TBD

SUNDAY, JAN. 12, 11 AM

TIM CHAMPLIN+

(Gloria Kelley)

SERVERS, LECTORS &

EMs TBD

TUESDAY, JANUARY 14, 9 AM

THURSDAY, JANUARY 16, 9 AM

TIPS FOR DRIVING IN THE SNOW

- 1) INSTALL WINTER TIRES
- 2) DRIVE SLOW
- 3) CONTINUE UNTIL YOU SEE PALM TREES
- 4) APPLY BRAKES & SUNSCREEN

WINK

We are Here to Listen and Take Action!
You Matter. You are Family.
Archdiocesan 24 hr. Abuse Reporting Hotline
1-888-437-0764

Please Pray for Our Sick Parishioners:

Scotty Auten, Trudy Arrington, Asher Barhite, David Bensley, Nancy Brabner, Candace Carne, Mason Cobble, Larry Cooper, Al & Carol Corkum, Jimmy Dwyer, Nancy Jane Edwards, Cynthia Fulton, Matthew Gaudet, Daniel Hamby, Megan Hoette, Anne Janecjii, Phyllis Lampert, Laura McClung, Elizabeth McWilliams, Linda Meeks, Emilie Meyer, Sandy Murphy, Dale & Jane Osterling, John Pitner, Bill, Jeff & Rose Pugliano, Nicholas Richardson, Kathy Samilo, Mary Ann Shanahan, Jim Staub, Helen Telford, Lilia Thompson, Ross Vecchio Sr. & Jr., Trey Wright Family & baby Nalayva Rose Marie.

Weekly Offerings
1/5 Offertory Received: \$14,719
(Online Giving): \$835
Weekly Offertory Goal: \$6,000
Solemnity of Mary \$665

UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Sunday, January 12, Pancake Breakfast, 9 am – Noon HAS BEEN CANCELLED.**
- **Tuesday, January 14, Ladies Guild meeting & Finance Council meeting at 6 pm.**
- **Wednesday, January 15, Knights of Columbus 4th Degree Planning Meeting at 7 pm.**

Knights of Columbus

Any male 18 or older and a practicing Catholic can become a Knight. If you are interested, please contact Kieron Gleeson at 423-240-1798 or kierongleeson@gmail.com

Women in Prayer

We have prayer shawls available for anyone who needs one. Please contact Irene or Linda, and if you have any prayer requests.

Contact Irene Staub at istaub1014@aol.com or Linda Swope at rlswope374@comcast.net.

ST. VINCENT de Paul

Our Christmas food pantry day on Dec. 21st was very busy! We had 43 families come for food help. We will be having our next pantry day on Jan. 18th. The number of families who come for food assistance continues to grow. We depend on your help to make it possible to meet this need. Lately we have been financially unable to supplement the food with paper towels, toilet paper and similar items. If you can donate them, it would be appreciated.

We'd like to give a special thankyou to the St. Gerard Senior Ministry for their generous Christmas donation to our general fund and to Bags of Blessings. Also, thanks to an anonymous donor who gave a substantial sum to Bags of Blessings.

We pray that all of you have a happy and blessed New Year and ask that you will pray for us that God will continue to aid our efforts.

Our next food pantry day will be Jan. 18th from 10am - Noon.

HELP LINE: 678-892-6163.

SVdP meets the 1st and 3rd Monday of each month at 7 pm.

The Pope's January Prayer Intention:

For the right to an education.

Let us pray for migrants, refugees, and those affected by war, that their right to an education, which is necessary to build a better world, might always be respected.

FEAST OF THE BAPTISM OF THE LORD

The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord closes the Christmas Season and opens Ordinary Time. "The people were filled with expectation, and all were asking in their hearts whether John might be the Christ. John answered them all, saying, "I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is coming. I am not worthy to loosen the thongs of His sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire." After all the people had been baptized and Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, heaven opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased" (Lk. 3:15-16, 21-22).

It is interesting to note that Luke recounts that Jesus' baptism was an experience of the people: "After all the people had been baptized." Jesus manifests profound solidarity with His sinful people, giving from the very beginning a certain "stamp" to His mission. Jesus reveals that He is the One who has come to "get His hands dirty" to bear the sins of humanity

In the context of prayer, Jesus receives the gift of the Holy Spirit. This detail suggests that every time we pray, when we are speaking one on One with God (St. Teresa of Avila), it is possible to experience the Holy Spirit. To pray is to return to Him, to remain with Him. It is the breath of our being children of God which we were introduced to in our own baptism. Only in prayer can our lives as God's children be nourished. We allow God to say over us: "you are the beloved," "You are important to me."

In Jesus, the Father's chosen Son, each of us is "the Lord's beloved child," with whom God is pleased. This is true for every brother and sister, independently of our condition of being a sinner. In baptism, what happened at Christmas happens again: God descends, He enters within us so that we might be reborn in Him as a new creature. But we are asked to bear witness to this new life so that just as Jesus could say, "those who have seen me have seen the Father" (Jn. 14:9), so too can other people say of us, "I see Jesus in you." Humanly this is impossible, certainly. But "nothing is impossible with God"¹ (Lk. 1:37).

{October 20, 2013 - morning}

Why I Would Be Baptized

(Lk.7:29,30; John 3:1-5; Romans 6)

- ◇ Why should anyone make the decision to be immersed?
- ◇ Baptism is *downplayed* as necessary and significant
- ◇ All should study to Understand God's place for baptism
- ◇ The Spiritual benefits of baptism show its necessity!
- Baptism Saves - Acts 4:12; Mk:16:16; I Pet.3:21
- Necessary if obedient to God - Matt.3:14-17
- Baptism Washes away sin - Acts 22:16; Rev.1:5
 - 1) One should not put off becoming clean - Acts 22:16
 - 2) The filth removed involves sin's punishment
 - a) One is washed to obtain needed cleansing - I Cor.6:9-11
 - b) His blood is the cleansing agent - Rev.7:14; 12:11
 - c) His blood is the only power to deal with sin
- Baptized to be Forgiven - Acts 2:36-38;
- Baptism, a burial and resurrection
- death to sin and raised to New life - Rom.6:3,4
- points to separation (death) and transition (change)
- Baptism is accepting Christ as Lord - Lk.6:46
- When's the best time to let Him become our Lord? - Phil.2:11
- Baptism Clothed one with Christ - Gal.3:27
- I do not want to be found 'naked' before God - II Cor.5:2-4
- I realize that all spiritual blessings are in Christ - Eph.1:3
- Baptism, entrance into His church - John 10:9
- ◇ **After Baptism:** salvation; forgiveness; cleansing; blood
blood; no obedience; not washed spiritually; not buried/raised;
no real hope; no eternal life. "Would you be free from...?"

KEEP YOUR
HEAD UP
GOD GIVES
HIS HARDEST
BATTLES TO
HIS STRONGEST
SOLDIERS