

# THE PHILADELPHIA ORDINARIATE POST

---

A NEWSLETTER OF ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CATHOLIC CHURCH  
THE PERSONAL ORDINARIATE OF THE CHAIR OF SAINT PETER IN THE PHILADELPHIA AREA

[WWW.SJBRIDGEPORT.ORG](http://WWW.SJBRIDGEPORT.ORG)

502 FORD STREET, BRIDGEPORT, PENNSYLVANIA 19405

215-247-1092

---

January, 2018

Dear Parishioners and Friends,

After the shepherds visited the stable in Bethlehem at Jesus' birth, Luke tells us that "Mary kept all these things and pondered them in her heart." "These things" no doubt included what the shepherds had told of the angelic vision they had seen, as well as Gabriel's message to her and what Joseph had told her of his dream. She ponders the facts about her Son. Her meditation helps her to understand what God is doing.

But I think there was probably more to it than that. Her pondering led her to God, and thus to His love. She came to a more intimate relation with Him, not just knowing about Him, but knowing Him in the intimacy of love. Meditation formed her heart as well as her mind.

Her meditation also formed her will: in reflecting on what God was doing, she prepared to act rightly, especially as Jesus' mother. Being mother of the Son of God and Savior of the world is apt to present special challenges. We know of one – when He remained behind in the temple at the age of 12, "Thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing." Mary meditates in order to be prepared to do everything that God wants her to do: to conform her will to His in all things.

Allowing God to thus form her heart, mind and will also allows her to develop a profound sense of awe and wonder at God and His intervention in human affairs. Given that God is God, awe and wonder are only appropriate. Without Mary's pondering, though, they can be ignored or overlooked.

These fruits of meditation are also available to us, when we follow the example of our blessed Mother. We will need to take regular time for quiet, opening ourselves to God. Silence is not easy, since we are so used to noise, and can be a little frightening. But we know that we have nothing to fear of God: He seeks only our good, and has Himself dealt with our sin and all that separates us from Him. He thus removes any legitimate cause for fear. Meditative reading of Scripture (*lectio divina*) is a good place to start. It is where Mary started, though for her it was not a written text, but words which she had heard. The aim for us is not to read a certain amount, but to allow the text to open us to God. In the quiet, we let God be God. We let Him into our hearts, to do with us as He wills. We practice love and surrender, again following the example of the Blessed Virgin. "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to Thy will." It also makes sense for us to ask for her intercession to help us follow her example.

So let this be an encouragement to persevere with quiet, or start a regular time if you have not been doing it. It should be a normal part of every Christian's life. Its fruits are manifest and abundant, in the formation of our minds, hearts and wills. We learn of God and get to know Him (and not just about Him). Since our being is hid with Christ in God, we also learn about who we are. And we develop a sense of wonder, which should always be a part of our response to God and His generous goodness. Wonder allows us to be properly thankful, and thus is the door to joy. Our efforts at quiet yield rich rewards.

## **Evensong & Benediction**

We will be celebrating Epiphany with Evensong & Benediction on Friday, January 12<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. (The Epiphany Mass is on January 7<sup>th</sup>, following the Latin Rite practice in the United States.) Evensong is one of the particular riches of the Anglican patrimony, and this is a chance both to enjoy it ourselves and to share it with others. As such, you will want to join us that night, and invite others. Being a Friday night, it is an ideal occasion to introduce others to St John's. Mr Gatens has the choir preparing music of Mozart, Tallis, Atwood, and Evensong canticles of his own composition. Something to look forward to.



Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, which follows Evensong, has been characterized as an extension of the Elevations at Mass. It is a time when we can lay aside external activity, attend wholly to our Lord in His Sacramental Presence, and adore. For many of us, it is a very special time of intimacy with Jesus.

### **March for Life**

The annual March for Life in Washington, D.C. is Friday, January 19<sup>th</sup>. (There will be no noon Mass at SJB that day.) While our Pro-Life Activities Coordinator, Matt Hummel (aka PAC-Man) will be marching with his group of students from Roman Catholic High School, I hope to join the group from the Ordinariate. I would invite you to join us! The rally commonly draws several hundred thousand marchers in very cold weather, to give witness to the need for legal protection for children before they are born. It is clear that Roe v. Wade has not “settled” the question. The thousands who show up on DC every January give ample testimony to the fact. America remains divided about whether parents should have the legal right (they do not and cannot have the moral right) to kill their children before birth. The abortion industry is well funded, and politically active, and finds a sympathetic ear in much of the media establishment. (The media rarely pay much attention to the March for Life, even though it is usually the largest demonstration of the year in DC.) Less manifest, but still serious, is the harm abortion does to mothers, who are hurt by being given the choice – and often encouragement – to abort their children in difficult or inconvenient circumstances. Rather they should have our support (as many pregnancy centers provide).

If you are able to come, check in with me before you go, and I’ll provide details about how to connect with the other Ordinariate marchers (from St Thomas More, Mount Calvary, St Luke’s and Christ the King, at the least). Likewise if you need a ride, let me know, and we’ll see what we can arrange.

### **Etc.**

Ordo calendars for 2018 are available. These reflect the liturgical calendar used by the Ordinariate, including those occasions where it differs from the Latin Rite. They are put together by John Covert, an Ordinariate member in Massachusetts, who does it as a labor of love and donates any proceeds to the Bishop’s Appeal. Once again this year, our costs have been underwritten by the Jacob Ruth Funeral Home in Chestnut Hill. We are grateful for their generosity. If you need a calendar mailed, let me know.

Likewise new parish directories are now available, a joint effort of Cristina Shiffman and Pat Lincoln. A reminder: these are intended for internal use; phone numbers, email, etc., should not be shared outside the parish. If you need a copy, please ask.

The Thrift Shop has reopened after Christmas with a tremendous sale: everything that is priced over a dollar (except CDs and DVDs) is half price. Come and take advantage of the sale, Tuesdays and Saturdays, 10-3. The shop is exceptionally well-stocked with clothes at this point (come and see!), and is closed to new donations of clothing. Other salable items gratefully accepted. In 2017, the shop contributed ---- to the parish, in addition to its unquantifiable and important work of introducing SJB to folk in the community.

### **Calendar**

January 10<sup>th</sup>, 7 p.m., Patricians adult discussion group. This month: How we are Saved.

January 12<sup>th</sup>, 7:30 p.m.: Epiphany **Evensong & Benediction**; reception & “meet the choir” following

January 19<sup>th</sup>, March for Life in Washington (no noon Mass at SJB)

January 21<sup>st</sup>, adult forum during coffee hour: what we learn about marriage from the Ordinariate marriage rite. Another in the series on the Christian family.

February 14<sup>th</sup>, Ash Wednesday. Masses at 10 a.m. and 6:30 p.m.

Thanks goes to all who helped decorate the church for Christmas: Joanna Falini, Pat Lincoln, Dan Elliot, Mark & Angela Johnson, Bill & Clare Finegan, Leslie Altena, Rita Moyer, Dawn Lybrand, Chris Jordan, Lisa Livezey, (& her mom, Beth), Bell Anderson, Roger Converse, John & Mike Ewing, Tom O’Connell, Carol Desandro, the Suttons (Joann, Elena, Felicity), David & Alexa Reavill, Mary Hirschfeld, and also the younger Finegan, Livezey and Johnson helpers. Also thanks to Sue Cannon for contributing magnolia greens and fruit for the decorations. It is a corporate effort, and would not be possible without people pitching in. It all looks lovely! I especially want to thank my wife for organizing the effort, obtaining most of the greens and flowers, and for keeping everything watered during Christmastide.

Yours faithfully,

Fr David Ousley