

Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church

January 10th/January 11th: Baptism of the Lord (English)
Holy Family (Latin)



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Pastor

Rev. Jim W. Booth

SACRAMENTS and LITURGY

English Saturday Vigil Mass: 4:00 p.m.

English Sunday Mass: 9:00 a.m.

Traditional Latin Sunday Mass: 7:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m.

English Weekday Masses: 8:30 a.m. Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Latin Weekday Masses: 8:30 a.m. Tuesday and Thursday, 6:30 p.m. on First Friday

First Saturday Latin Mass: 8:30 a.m. with confessions beginning at 8:00 a.m.

Holy Day Mass: As Announced

Confessions: Saturday 3:30-3:55 p.m., Sunday 7:00-7:25, 8:30-8:55, and 10:15-10:40 a.m.

Baptisms: By Appointment

Marriage Arrangements must be made with the Pastor at least 6 months before the date of the wedding. Talk to the Pastor before making any firm wedding plans. No destination weddings.

COVID-19 RESPONSE, MASS & DEVOTIONS: We have an additional Sunday Latin Mass at 7:30 a.m., to aid in social distancing, and continues on a provisional basis.

NOTE ON CONFESSIONS: If there is a significant line for confession, Fr Booth might say part of the formula of absolution while the penitent recites the act of contrition. The full formula of absolution is always said, but the first part might be said softly during the act of contrition. Thus, you might only hear “and I absolve you from your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”

WELCOME to all of our visitors: We are glad you have attended Mass with us. To join Blessed Sacrament, please pick up a parish census form in the vestibule at the back of the church.

NOTICE ON CHECKS: Please make out all checks to Blessed Sacrament or Blessed Sacrament Church.

IN MEMORIAM: For Neal Tallie, the sanctuary lamp will burn for the repose of his soul from January 11th to January 17th. The sanctuary lamp will burn for the repose of Maxine Olson from January 18th until January 24th.

MORNING WITH MARY: All ladies are invited to a morning of devotion next Saturday, January 17th. Adoration will begin at 8:30 a.m., there will be confession during adoration, followed by benediction at about 9:10 a.m., and concluding with a Latin Mass at about 9:15 a.m.

THIRD SUNDAY: Next Sunday is the Third Sunday of the month. We will have vocations prayers and a social following the 10:45 a.m. Mass.

CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES FOR 2026: Contribution envelopes are located in the back vestibule. If yours are not there, let Fr Booth know.

PRO-LIFE MASS & RALLY: There will be pro-life Mass at the Cathedral of St Paul on Saturday, January 17th at 9:00 a.m. followed by a prayer vigil and witness for life at 10:45 a.m. at the Birmingham Planned Parenthood located at 1019 1st Ave. North.

FLOWER DONATIONS: Additional donations were given toward the Christmas Flowers in remembrance of James E. Mickel, Shack & Lois Pruitt, and Bessie K. Lawrence. May they and all of the faithful departed rest in eternal and profound peace.

FIRST COMMUNION: First Communion is scheduled for Laetare Sunday, March 15th at the 10:45 a.m. Mass.

PRAY FOR OUR SEMINARIANS: Please pray for our seminarians: Deacon John Paul Stepnowski, Deacon Andrew Vickery, John Gardiner, Collins Hess, Hunter Limbaugh, Francisco Rodriguez, Justin Brouillette, Cameron Huhlein, Patrick Letterle, Wilson Moin, Joshua Callahan, Franz Mercado, Thomas Rogers, Nick Smith, Benjamin Caruna, Matthew Pickard, Maximilian Waldron, Fernando Casillas, Jack Lyons, Jorge Martinez, Jonathan Ruscoe, Dominic Rumore, Matthew Gagnon, Friar Apollo, and Owen Sederstrand.

CATHOLIC CHARITIES: You should have received a Pledge Card in the mail, if not you also can enter your annual pledge or recurring gift any time at catholiccharitiesbhm.org. Our pledge goal for this year is \$29,000. As of January 9th, we have \$24,075 pledged.

PARISH SUPPORT: The collection last week was \$7983 and \$3855 was given for the Preservation Fund. As always, many thanks for your generosity.

NOTE ON MASS INTENTIONS: There is large backlog on Mass Intentions. Therefore, until further notice, Mass Intentions will only be accepted on a one Mass per family per week basis. No exceptions. The Mass Intentions for this week date from April 13th.

MASS SCHEDULE AND INTENTIONS: (*Masses in the Rectory Chapel)

Sat, Jan 10:	4:00 p.m.	Special intention for the Palmer Family (by Brenna Schwager)
Sun, Jan 11:	7:30 a.m.	Special intention for the Palmer Family (by Brenna Schwager)
	9:00 a.m.	Pro Populo
	10:45 a.m.	† Jack Roe (by Mary Jane Kelly)
Mon, Jan 12:	*8:30 a.m.	† Catherine & Joseph Kelly (by Mary Jane Kelly)
Tues, Jan 13:	*8:30 a.m.	† Catherine & Joseph Kelly (by Kevin Kelly)
Wed, Jan 14:	*8:30 a.m.	Private intention
Thur, Jan 15:	*8:30 a.m.	† Grace Hill (by Alan & Pam Olson)
Fri, Jan 16:	*8:30 a.m.	Private intention
Sat, Jan 17:	9:15 a.m.	† Grace Hill (by Richard & Barbara Juneau)
	4:00 p.m.	† Marsha Zahumensky (by Monica Duvall)
Sun, Jan 18:	7:30 a.m.	† Michael Kaiser Harmon (by Monica Duvall)
	9:00 a.m.	Pro Populo
	10:45 a.m.	† Marion Clark (by Monica Duvall)

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK AND HOMEBOUND especially for Kathy Newman, Daniel Flemming, Fr Timothy Gahan, George Sampedro, Jesse Hernandez, Jose Mariano Hernández Avila, Stan Hartdegen, Kent Graeve, Justin Meadows, Rachel Maxwell, John Minjares, Sr., Virginia Elmer, Pedro Antonio Triana, John Davis, Chorbishop Richard Saad, Deb Rankin, Paul Trussel, Paul Caruso, Jeff Brown, Mary Simmons, Linda Henry, Lisa DeKam Nicholls, Ronnie Buchanan, Barbara Williams, Bob Wiseman, Eve Moore, Carol Brandley, Eddie Hunter, Pete Ransom, Jerry Joiner, Beryl Curtis, Linda Cooper, Kay Dorion, Krissy Chism, Lamar Smith, Wayne Little, Andrea Little, Fran Costanza, Christine Cover, Thatcher Kerzie, Malcolm Perry, Koslyn Chism, Kathleen Strawmeyer, and Stephanie Perry.

NEXT WEEK'S MASS READINGS

4:00 p.m. 2nd Sunday of Ordinary Time
7:30 a.m. 2nd Sunday After Epiphany
9:00 a.m. 2nd Sunday of Ordinary Time
10:45 a.m. 2nd Sunday After Epiphany

Isa 49:3,5-6, 1Cor 1:1-3, Jn 1:29-34
Rom 12:6-16, Jn 2:1-11
Isa 49:3,5-6, 1Cor 1:1-3, Jn 1:29-34
Rom 12:6-16, Jn 2:1-11

Water is Life, Water Bestows Eternal Life

Hollywood usually gets life in the Old West wrong. They love to show cattle rustlers, gun slingers, bank robbers, heroic sheriffs, and cowboys. They show stables, general stores, banks, saloons, and more saloons. The saloon will fit a particular stereotype: a piano, men gambling, and elaborately dressed women hanging out in the saloon. Life just was not like that. The vast majority of people in the wild west were farmers. They did not go into town often, they did not have money to waste at the saloon, and they did not have leisure time. What people did in the Old West was struggle to survive. Life was touch-and-go for farmers, ranchers, and businessmen. Drought, pestilence, and other natural disasters made life difficult and uncertain. Hollywood makes the Old West more of a cartoon than a depiction of reality. We could say the same thing about their treatment of medieval times and Biblical times as well. Stereotypes prevail in most historical periods that Hollywood tries to depict.

Stereotypes are useful, however, in storytelling because the theme or the moral of the story can be obscured by historical details. The stereotypes provide a backdrop against which the story is told. But for a stereotype to work it must convey the truth at some level. We would balk at men in an Old West saloon drinking mojitos and arguing about college football or knights in a pub drinking soy milk lattes and listening to jazz music. We know that the cowboys in a saloon would drink whiskey or beer. The medieval pub would serve ale, mead, or wine. What were they drinking in the time of Jesus? The beverage of choice was wine. Why? Why did people in the past drink wine, beer, ale, mead, or whiskey? Were they alcoholics? Not at all. It had everything to do with the safety of water. Most lakes, rivers, and streams were too polluted. Rivers and streams were the sewers of the day and the further downstream you were, the worse it got. It was the brewing, fermenting, and distilling processes that killed the harmful germs and the alcohol preserved the beverages. You could almost always trust beer, wine, ale, and whiskey.

This is foreign to us today because we have fairly safe municipal water supplies. But in times past, if you found a safe stream or spring, this was worth more than gold. It is no wonder that 13 western states have towns named Sweetwater. Safe water was precious. It was a matter of life and death. You were much more likely to get shot in a dispute over a good well than in a bar fight or a bank robbery.

It makes sense that God made water the visible and tangible element by which He conveys not just earthly life but also eternal life. Clean water gives and sustains life. Baptism by water and the Spirit is grace giving and eternal life promising. Earthly life is impossible without clean water, eternal life is possible by being spiritually cleansed in the waters of baptism. Jesus says "*Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved; whoever does not believe will be condemned*" (Mk 16:16). It is also clear when Jesus says to Nicodemus: "*Amen, amen, I say to you, no one can see the kingdom of God without being born from above... Amen, amen, I say to you, no one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit*" (Jn 3:3,5). No one can see or enter the Kingdom of God without baptism. This is the way that God has prescribed for us to become a new creation, to be baptized into the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Baptism is the way that God has given us to become adopted children of the Father.

This is why we hear the Father say "*This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased.*" He is revealing Who Jesus is and also revealing the existence of the Holy Spirit Who descended on Jesus in the form of a dove. Jesus already was the Son of God and He already possessed the Holy Spirit. By being baptized, Jesus makes it possible through His humanity for us to become sons and daughters of God and possible for us to become tabernacles of the Holy Spirit.

Baptism is a truly profound gift given by the Father, through the Son, with the Holy Spirit. We must not take our baptism for granted. It is easy for us to take clean water for granted, and it can be just as easy to take our baptisms for granted. If good, safe water was worth fighting for and sometimes even worth dying for, what is the baptism we have received worth, especially since Jesus died that we might receive baptism? If our ancestors would name towns Sweetwater because that town had a pure and safe water supply, how sweet must we regard our own baptisms that have purified us and saved us from hell? -Fr Booth