

Weekend of December 24, 2023  
***Fourth Sunday of Advent***

**Barona:**

**Mass:** Tuesday through Friday. Rosary at 7:45 AM, Mass at 8:00 AM. @ Shrine

**Saturday:** 5:00 PM mass

**Sunday:** Sunday 8:00 AM. @ church

**Confessions:** By appointment only

**Adoration:** 1st Fri. of the month (8:00 AM).

**Viejias:**

**Sunday:** Sunday, 10:30 AM. @ Church

**Confessions:** By appointment only.

**Sycuan:**

**Sunday:** Sunday Mass 12:30 noon @ the Church

**Confessions:** By appointment only

**PLEASE PRAY FOR....**

Vicaldo Family, Michele Nikas Beaman, Richard Nikas, Wendy Reyes, Irmina Gines, Gimo Manuel, Ruben and Marcie Cu, Joyce Martinez, Dustin Lutze, Deloris Loucks, Sam Halabo, Lisa Smallwood, Eleanor Davis Wallace, Walter Raczak, Robert and Margie Cruz, Mike Wise, Neil Quizon, Jim Hughes, Mary Begay, Tonito Arcangel, Juliet Ray, George Arviso, Rose Ramos, Zita Haygood, Lilly Gautreaux, Mark Noriega, Juan Miguel, Bert Zita, Jim Hughes, Laurie Boedicker, Aspen Sergin, Robert Laurel, Janet Vilareal, Romero Family, Annie McTavish, John Francis, Orlando Nicolas, Blanca Lechner, Paolo Espiritu, John Clark, Kevin Bethsayag, Tyre Nichols, Steve TeSam, Jeanette Garcia, Mike Banegas, Bennett Zerrudo, Mark Noriega, Carol Richardson, Nancy Rourke, Colleen Crowden, Jeff Ashii, Pamela Nolan CSC, Rosario and Paul Estepa  
Please check prayer list and add names as desired.

**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

**Barona:** Wednesdays at 3:00 p.m.  
with Alyssa Parada

Sacramental Preparation with Mark Price are ongoing each Wednesday.

**Viejias:** 3:00 PM

**Barona:** 4:30 PM

No classes 12/27 & 1/3/24 due to the holiday!

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

*Sunday Mass is livestreamed @ 8:00 AM, Barona.  
Just go on Facebook under Herman Manuel*

**December**

**Saturday, Dec. 23: Anticipated Masses for Fourth Sunday of Advent**

5:00 PM – Sycuan

7:00 PM – Viejias

**Sunday, Dec. 24: Sunday Mass**

8:00 AM – Barona

**Sunday, Dec. 24: Christmas Eve Masses**

5:00 PM - Sycuan

7:00 PM – Viejias

10:00 PM – Barona

**Monday, Dec. 25: Christmas Day Mass**

8:00 AM Mass

**Sunday, Dec 31: Holy Family Mass**

8:00 AM - Barona

10:30 AM – Viejias

12:30 – Sycuan

**Sunday, Dec. 31: New Year's Eve Mass**

5:00 PM – Barona

**2024**

**Monday, Jan. 1, 2024 – New Year's Day Mass**

8:00 AM - Barona

**Sunday, Jan 7, 2024 – Children's Mass,** led by Mark Price at all reservations.

**“For today in the City of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.” Luke 2:11-12**



## **PASTOR'S CORNER**

### **Mary, Mother of Christ**

#### **A reflection on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent**

Some nursery school kids were preparing a Christmas play. Little Cynthia did not like the part she was assigned to play. She wanted to change parts with her friend Monica. When the teacher asked her why, she answered, "Because it is easier to be an angel than to be the mother of Christ." The little girl is certainly right. To be the mother of Christ is no light matter. Yet difficult as it sounds, that is exactly what we are all called to be. In fact, we could say that even though Jesus was born in Bethlehem, his real desire is to be born in the hearts of believers, to be re-produced by believers.

Mother of Christ is a title we usually reserve for Mary. But Mary is mother of Christ in two senses. She is mother of Christ in the physical sense that she carried Jesus in her womb and gave birth to him. This is an unrepeatable event and an honor that no other human being could share with her. But she is also mother of Christ in a spiritual sense. In a spiritual sense the role of being mother of Christ is available to all Christians. We all, men, women and children, can and should become mothers of Christ. The idea of Christians called to be mothers of Christ is very common among Christian mystics. The Dominican priest mystic, Meister Eckhart, said that God made the human soul for her to bear the divine Son, and that when this birth happens it gives God greater pleasure than the creation of heaven and earth.

What is this spiritual motherhood of Christ and how does it happen? For the answer we need to go right back to Jesus himself.

While he was still speaking to the crowds, his mother and his brothers were standing outside, wanting to speak to him. Someone told him, "Look, your mother and your brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you." But to the one who had told him this, Jesus replied, "Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?" And pointing to his disciples, he said, "Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does

the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother" (Matthew 12:46-50)

This shows that (a) Jesus expects his followers to be not only his brothers and sisters but his mother's as well, and (b) the way to be the mother of Jesus is by doing the will of God. Spiritual motherhood of Christ is attained by saying yes to God, even when God appears to demand from us what is humanly impossible, like asking Mary to be a virgin mother. To become mothers of Christ we need to make the prayer of Mary our own: "**Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word**" (Luke 1:38).

This prayer of Mary has been known as the world's greatest prayer. It is the prayer that brought God down from heaven to dwell in the soul and body of a lowly young woman. It is the prayer that brought about the greatest event in human history, God becoming human in Jesus. It is a prayer that changed forever the course of human history some 2000 years ago. This prayer is so very different from what has been called the world's most common prayer, the prayer in which we try to get God to do our will. The world's most common prayer says, "My will be done," whereas the world greatest prayer says, "Thy will be done."

Yes, little Cynthia was right. It is not easy to be the mother of Christ. But in today's gospel Mary shows us how. It is in hearing God's word and saying yes to God even when God's will seems to go against all our plans and hopes for the future. As Christmas draws near, Mary reminds us that the best Christmas, in fact the only true Christmas, is that Christ be born not in the little town of Bethlehem but in the inner sanctuary of our hearts.

*Fr Munachi E. Ezeogu, cssp*

## **Merry Christmas!!**