

Dear Padre,

The Bible talks about Jesus' brothers and sisters. Is there scriptural proof that Jesus was Mary's only child?

The Catholic Church's position is that Mary had only one child; her son called Jesus. Yet there are at least ten scriptural references to "the brothers of Jesus" or to his "sisters" (see Matthew 13:55–56, Mark 6:3, and Luke 8:19–21).

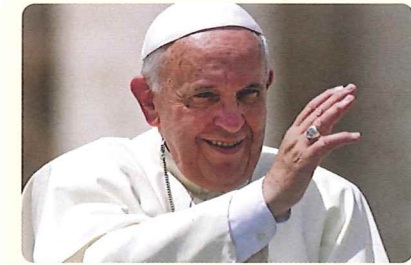
The difficulty is that the meaning of the term "brothers" (translated from the Greek *adelphos*) isn't restricted to the sharing of a parent. On the contrary, it may not only refer to other relatives, including cousins, but also to close relationships, such as disciples. This is not unlike how we might refer to "brothers in arms" as those who fought in a war together, or a religious order of brothers or sisters.

Recall, too, that Jesus and his disciples spoke Aramaic, and there is no equivalent for the meaning of "cousins" as we know it in that language. Instead, the word for brother or sister was used when referring to cousins. Thus, when St. Jerome (*circa* 340–420) translated the Bible from Hebrew into Church Latin, he considered "the brothers of Jesus" as cousins, not siblings. After all, it would have been the rightful responsibility of these male relatives of Jesus to take care of Mary when Jesus died. Yet Jesus entrusts his mother to the care of his beloved disciple John (John 19:26). ●

Fr. Byron Miller, CSsR / DearPadre.org

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
December 25 <i>Nativity of the Lord</i> Is 52:7–10 Heb 1:1–6 Jn 1:1–18 or 1:1–5, 9–14	December 26 <i>St. Stephen, the First Martyr</i> Acts 6:8–10; 7:54–59 Mt 10:17–22	December 27 <i>St. John, Apostle and Evangelist</i> 1 Jn 1:1–4 Jn 20:1a, 2–8	December 28 <i>Holy Innocents, Martyrs</i> 1 Jn 1:5–2:2 Mt 2:13–18	December 29 <i>Christmas Weekday</i> 1 Jn 2:3–11 Lk 2:22–35	December 30 <i>Christmas Weekday</i> 1 Jn 2:12–17 Lk 2:36–40	December 31 <i>Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph</i> Sir 3:2–6, 12–14 Col 3:12–21 or 3:12–17 Lk 2:22–40 or 2:22, 39–40

Do you have a question for the Padre?
Go to [DearPadre.org](#) to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.



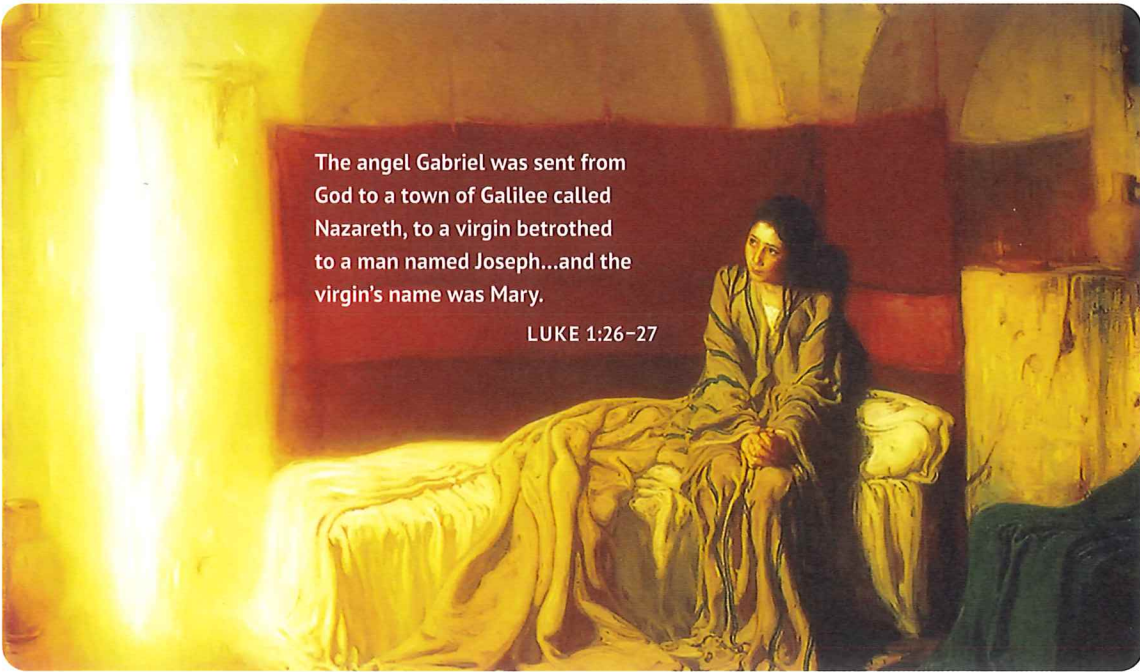
A WORD FROM POPE FRANCIS

Let us ask our Lady for a grace...that she kindle our enthusiasm for the ideal of holiness which is not a matter of holy cards and images, but is about living what happens each day, humbly and joyfully...with our eyes fixed on God and the neighbor we meet.

ANGELUS, ROME, DECEMBER 8, 2021

Our Parish COMMUNITY

December 24, 2023
Fourth Sunday of Advent (B)
2 Samuel 7:1–5, 8b–12, 14a, 16 / Romans 16:25–27 / Luke 1:26–38



The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph...and the virgin's name was Mary.

LUKE 1:26–27

Wondering Why

FR. JOSEPH JUKNIALIS

The old axiom goes: if you want to make God laugh, tell God your plans. All too often the vision God has for us takes us in quite varying directions. The stories of King David and of Mary echo such realities. David, who wanted to build a temple for the Ark of the Covenant so God would not need to live in a tent, had his plans nixed, only to be reminded that it is *God* who does the building in life and not David. And Mary, who found herself confused over how she might conceive, was asked to simply trust and place her life in the hands of God. Both said "yes."

There are always times when the unfolding path of God for us may unsettle us: the complexities of immigrants at our doorstep, the changing demographics of our cities, the need to close or merge parishes, the upheavals of our personal lives. We find ourselves asking why without receiving any answers. Each time there is no answer, consider it an invitation to trust in a power greater than ourselves.

Not all rhythms of life are necessarily caused by the hand of God, but then one can never be sure. Who is to say where and how and through whom God works? Christmas comes as a reminder that God's love and presence still unfolds in varied and new ways, always giving birth again and again to the divine made flesh in our lives. The mystery of the Incarnation points to this truth: God is present in all of life. ●

Reflect

Have you ever had your plans unsettled in a way that turned out, in the end, to be a gift from God?



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Fr. Peter Tran, Pastor—355-6405
Tuesday—Friday 9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Email: saintanthonylakin@gmail.com
Website: saintanthonylakin.org



Karen Burden, Rel.Edu. Committee 355-6388
Lisa Gannett, DRE 355-6611
Gwen Waechter, Parish C. Chair 272-1030
Tressa Powers, Finance C. Chair 355-6206
Altar S. President, Nanette Rice 355-7676
Tom Bachman, Grand Knight 640-8259
Prayer Line Starters, Allison Bushek 355-1696
& Nanette Rice 355-7676

Reconciliation: Confessions will be heard every Saturday at 3:00 p.m. and every Sunday at 8:00 a.m. or by appointment.

Baptism: Parents who have children to be baptized must be registered. Godparents must be 16 years of age or older and have received Confirmation and Eucharist. Please call the parish office for an appointment.

Marriage: Please contact parish priest at least four to six months before the wedding.

Anointing of the Sick: Celebrated anytime by calling a priest.

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

12/23/2023 - Saturday, 4: 00 p.m.

Servers: Jason Velasco, Jonathan Gannett, Nathan Gannett

Reader: Debbie Frederick

E.O.HC: Tino Rosales Jr., Karen Burden

12/24/2023 – Sunday, 4:00 p.m.

Servers: Volunteers

Reader: Volunteer

E.O. HC: Volunteers

FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY

12/30/2023 - Saturday, 4: 00 p.m.

Servers: Ryann & Brecken Bamberger, Rowen Simon

Reader: Gwen Waechter

E.O.HC: Rosemary & Tom Bachman

12/31/2023 – Sunday, 9:00 a.m.

Servers: Kirbe & Kipton Koons, Joleigh Lohman-Fuller

Reader: Hannah Schauf

E.O. HC: Toby Luhman-Fuller, Jessica Luhman-Fuller

DECEMBER 24, 2023 FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

“Lord, let us see your kindness, and grant us your salvation.” (PS 85)

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

Saturday, Dec. 23 4:00 p.m. People of our parishes

Sunday, Dec. 24 4:00 p.m. Richard Kitzner

Monday, Dec. 25 9:00 a.m. [Mass in Deerfield]

Tuesday, Dec. 26 9: 30 a.m. David Hoang

(Tuesday Mass at the High Plains Retirement Village)

Thursday, Dec. 28 12:10 p.m. David Hoang

Friday, Dec. 29 7:30 a.m. Special Int. Powers Family

Saturday, Dec. 30 4:00 p.m. People of our parishes

Sunday, Dec. 31 9:00 a.m. Emily Hughes



Merry Christmas!

It's wonderful to be with all of you as we gather to celebrate and give thanks for this miracle of miracles. Our loving God chose to immerse himself in our world in a profound and intimate way --- choosing to become like us so we could be more like him.

My friends, Christmas Day isn't the end of the Christmas season.

It is actually the beginning of it.

And not just on the Liturgical calendar although that is true, but in regard to what God wants to happen within each of us --- within each human heart that is open to his grace, his life.

It's not ok to just say, "Thank goodness Christmas is over until next year!" Rather, a faithful heart, a faithful person is one who says, "Jesus, I invite you in.

I want you to dwell within me and help me be the person you need me to be."

That's the true miracle, that God wants to be re-born in us this very day, wants to be more alive within us, more at home within us, more welcome within us. Fr. Peter



COLLECTION for December 17, 2023

Envelopes: \$625; Loose: \$239; Online Giving: \$ 501.29

Total \$1365.29; Average Weekly Expense: \$1,761.17. Income over/under –395.88

CHURCH PROJECT GOAL

\$52000—Building Fund To Date: \$43526.96. *Thank you so much for your love for our parish church and your faithful stewards*

UNDERSTANDING THE GOSPEL OF THE WEEK - (John 1:26-38)

Betrothed At the time of Jesus Jewish marriages had two stages. First the couple entered a betrothal, which is like an engagement. During the time of betrothal, the woman continued living with her father. After one or more years the couple married, and the woman moved in with her husband.

Favored one In Jesus’ day wealthy people typically acted as benefactors to those who were then expected to honor their patron in some public way. In this story God assumes the role of the patron, but Mary is an unlikely person to receive God’s attention. She’s poor, young, and a woman, so there’s little she can do publicly to honor God, which is one reason she’s greatly troubled. Mary’s encounter with Gabriel introduces a major theme of Luke’s Gospel: God favors the least among us. The people who seem the least able to honor God in any notable way become the very people God elevates.

Extraordinary conceptions At the time of Gabriel’s announcement to Mary, Elizabeth is six months pregnant with John the Baptist. Elizabeth and her husband, Zechariah, were past the age of bearing children, but God enabled them to conceive a child. Their story is similar to Abraham and Sarah, Manoah and his wife (Judges 13:2f), and Hannah and Elkanah (1 Samuel 1:1f). There are, however, no biblical stories in which a virgin becomes pregnant solely through God’s power. With the conception of Jesus God intervenes in human history in a unique and startling way. A stunning new stage of salvation history has begun.

Son of God It’s clear from our first reading that many Jews expected the messiah to be a descendant of David. Jesus fulfills this expectation since his mother is betrothed to Joseph, of the house of David (v.27). Gabriel emphasizes this ancestral link (vv.32-33). Jesus is the son to whom God will be especially devoted, as God promised in 2 Samuel 7:14a. More significantly, Jesus is also God’s Son in that he hasn’t been conceived in the usual human way but through divine agency. In the Old Testament God’s Spirit was readily shown to be with someone, including David (see 1 Samuel 16:13), but the Spirit is present in Jesus in a radically new way.

(oursundayreadings.wordpress.com)

UNDERSTANDING THE FIRST READING OF THE WEEK - (2Samuel7:1-5,8b-12,14a,16)

David’s successes David has become king, beat back the Philistines, made Jerusalem the capital of Israel, and moved into a palace. During all of this the ark of the covenant was kept inside a tent. The ark was a large, ornate box that contained the laws of the Sinai Covenant. It symbolized God’s presence. David wants to build a temple, a much more permanent structure, for the ark (v.2).

God moves God rejects David’s plan, though it’s not clear why. Perhaps God wants to emphasize that he alone is the true architect of Israel’s future. God also notes that he isn’t tied to a place but moves freely among his people (vv.8-9). One of the remarkable things about the God of Israel was that he was not confined to a region as gods were believed to be. On the contrary, God led people out of one region (Egypt) and settled them in another.

UPCOMING LITURGICAL CELEBRATIONS AND EVENTS

- 1/1/2024 New Year– Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God-Solemnity, but not obligatory. Mass in Lakin at 9:00 am.
- 1/3/2024: Pastoral Parish Council @ 5:30 p.m.
- 1/3/2024: Knights of Columbus Meeting @ 7:30p.m.
- 1/4/2024 Finance Council @ 6:00 p.m.

BUDGET SHOP We will be working at the Budget Shop on Saturday, December 23 and Tuesday, December 26. Please keep these dates on your busy calendars and try to save a few hours to help us. We are open on Saturdays and Tuesdays from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Any help will be greatly appreciated.

VOCATION CORNER DIOCESE SCHEDULE VOCATIONS DINNERS God calls each man to live out his own vocation. Your own vocation maybe to the priesthood. One way to discern what that may be is by attending an Andrew Dinner with Bishop Brungardt and priests of the diocese. If interested in attending any of the following events, please let Fr. Peter know. Below please find the 2024 schedule of Andrew Dinners

- Jan.7 College –Age 6-8 pm @ St. Andrew Church, Wright;**
- Jan.14 Post –College Age 6-8pm @ St. Andrew Church, Wright;**
- Jan. 28 High-School Age 6-8pm @ St. Joseph Church, Scott City**

HUNDREDFOLD FOR VOCATIONS The overall mission of any Catholic parish is to help its members fulfill their primary vocation: To grow in holiness. Within this broad context a Vocations Ministry has a narrower task: To help parishioners, especially our young people, discern God’s will for their specific vocation. The harvest is plentiful but the laborers are few. Let’s begin to work and pray together for an increase of vocations. Bishop Brungardt is requiring every parish to have a Vocations Committee in place by Lent 2024. Watch this space for developments.

STEWARDSHIP REFLECTION DECEMBER 24

“Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with you!” – Luke 1:28

After Jesus, we look to Mary as an ideal steward. Her entire life was lived in obedience to God’s call. Mary teaches us to live with joy for all we have been given. Just as the moon reflects the light of the sun, Mary reflects the light of Christ. Like Mary, we are called to reflect Christ’s light to the world through our gratitude and generosity.

“Salve, llena de gracia, El Señor está contigo.” - LUCAS 1:28

Después de Jesús, vemos a María como un ideal de corresponsabilidad. Vivió su vida entera obedeciendo el llamado de Dios. María nos enseña a vivir con alegría por todo lo que nos ha sido dado. Así como la luna refleja la luz del sol, María refleja la luz de Cristo. Como María, somos llamados a reflejar la luz de Cristo al mundo a través de nuestra gratitud y generosidad.

QUESTION OF THE WEEK How can I recognize and then bear witness to the light that comes from God?

PRAYER OF THE WEEK Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help, or sought thine intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my mother; to thee do I come, before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy hear and answer me. Amen



NATIONAL EUCHARISTIC REVIVAL

DO THIS IN REMEMBRANCE OF ME, PART 9: FORMS OF PENTITENTIAL



The Mass

As we mentioned last time, the Penitential Act has three different forms. Why are there three? For starters, each of these three prayers have been present in liturgical celebrations since the early days of the Church. Although they are similar in that they each acknowledge the truth about God (he is merciful) and us

(we need mercy), they each do so in a different way.

Form A, the ***Confiteor***, is hopefully a familiar prayer beginning with the words: “*I confess to Almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters...*” This prayer helps us to express sorrow for faults we have committed in word and in action. We humbly acknowledge that we have done wrong and also that we have sometimes failed to do good. Then, recognizing that we all need help, we ask the intercession of our Blessed Mother, all the other saints, and our brothers and sisters around us. In many ways, this is a great prayer for reminding us that we are all in the Christian life together.

Within the text of the Roman Missal, we are instructed to strike the breast during the words “*through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault*” (corresponding to the three “*mea culpa*” phrases of the Latin version). Throughout the Bible, striking the breast is a gesture of humility and sorrow for sins. Why three times? As Edward Sri indicates, the threefold repetition of fault “more fully expresses sorrow over our sins. [...] This line in the liturgy helps us recognize that sinning against God is no light matter. We must take responsibility for whatever wrong we have done, or the good that we should have done but failed to do.” Sri observes, “The *Confiteor* also challenges us to consider seriously four areas in which we may have fallen into sin: ‘In my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and what I have failed to do.’ These four points serve as an excellent examination of conscience” (*A Biblical Walk Through the Mass*, p. 33, 35). Form A can be replaced by either Forms B or C, both of which take their inspiration from the Book of Psalms (Psalm 51, for examples

Form B is less frequently practiced and thus not as well-known. The presider prays, “*Have mercy on us, O Lord,*” and the people respond, “*For we have sinned against you.*” The presider continues, “*Show us, O Lord, your mercy,*” and the people again respond, “*And grant us your salvation.*” This form, the ending of which recalls Psalm 85:8, acknowledges that we have sinned and asks for the Lord’s love and mercy.

For Form C, the Missal provides eight suggestions for use in the United States. Each of these involves the repetition of the words: “*Lord have mercy... Christ have mercy... Lord have mercy.*” Each verse of this form begins with a statement of acknowledgement about Jesus, called a trope, usually about his mission (e.g., “*you came to call sinners*”) or his person (e.g., “*you are Mighty God and Prince of Peace*”). These short verses help remind us who Jesus is and what he does for us. Why does the Church offer so many different sets of these prayers? Because Jesus is so wonderful! Even these 24 statements can’t express everything about our loving Savior. Imagine how many different verses would be possible if we wanted to include every aspect of our Savior’s love for us!

As the General Instruction of the Roman Missal says, “After the Penitential Act, the *Kyrie, eleison* (Lord, have mercy), is always begun, unless it has already been part of the Penitential Act” (*GIRM*, no. 52). Regarding the *Kyrie*, Edward Sri notes, “This three-fold plea for God’s mercy fittingly flows after the three-fold admission of one’s sin in the previous prayer, the *Confiteor*.” Sri goes on to say, “While the *Kyrie* is primarily an expression of repentance, it also can be seen as a petition, a prayer representing the cry of God’s people for assistance in their lives” (*A Biblical Walk Through the Mass*, p. 36, 39).

All this talk about the Lord’s mercy makes me feel very loved and hopeful for the graces to come in the rest of the Mass!

For Reflection:

1. Pray Psalm 85, noting the plea: “grant us your salvation” (v. 8). Seek and find encouragement in the promises the Lord speaks to his people in this psalm.

2. Practice *lectio divina* with Luke 18:9-14. Imagine yourself as the Pharisee taking stock of his good qualities. In what do you boast or take pride? Imagine yourself as the penitent tax collector, who strikes his breast and asks for mercy. Where do you need the Lord’s mercy in your life at this time? (Fr. Luke Spannagel)

FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

An embarrassment of riches

Every so many years, we experience this happy collision of observances: the last Sunday of Advent blossoms into Christmas Eve in a single day. Which means next week, the Feast of the Holy Family will roll into the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God by nightfall. It’s a mad scramble for presiders, preachers, choirs, and liturgists to keep up with the whole, holy mess of these occasions. Parishioners too will be obliged to untangle the remarkable Mass schedule this landslide of liturgies creates. Consider it a cheerful reminder that liturgy gathers us into mysteries that are not finite but everlasting.

CUARTO DOMINGO DE ADVIENTO

Underroche de riqueza

Cada tantos años, asistimos a esta feliz colisión de celebraciones: el último Domingo de Adviento se convierte en Nochebuena en un solo día. Lo que significa que la próxima semana, la Fiesta de la Sagrada Familia se convertirá en la Solemnidad de María, Madre de Dios al caer la noche. Los celebrantes, predicadores, coros y liturgistas se apresuran sin descanso para hacer frente a todo el desorden sagrado de estas ocasiones. Los feligreses también se verán obligados a desenredar el extraordinario calendario de Misas que crea este alud de liturgias. Considérenlo un alegre recordatorio de que la liturgia nos reúne en misterios que no son finitos sino imperecederos. (Preparetheword)