



My Dear Parishioners,

Praised be Jesus Christ! For the first time in many years, our friends from the Bethlehem Wood Carvings -- Butros and his wife -- are **not** with us this weekend. They are doing well but decided not to make the trip this year because of Covid-19. I spoke with them recently and they send their greetings to all. For those interested in a carving this year, here is their website: [bethlehemcarvings.org](http://bethlehemcarvings.org)

This week will be the last 7PM Monday Mass. Beginning Sept. 14, we will return to our normal Monday Schedule with Adoration though the day concluding with Rosary and Benediction at 7PM. Our 7 PM Wednesday Mass **will remain** on the calendar for the foreseeable future as it provides an opportunity for me to get away Tues/Wednesday and a chance for some of our working parishioners to attend a daily Mass.

Speaking of work, the beginning of September finds us celebrating Labor Day. This is fitting because of the return to school/work routine after the summer months. In the Church, the beginning of September encourages us to celebrate both a Mass of the Holy Spirit and the Blessed Mother's Birthday, Sept. 8<sup>th</sup>. That too is fitting because in Mary we find God the Holy Spirit's most beautiful work. 198 years ago, the protestant poet William Wordsworth said as much in a sonnet that he wrote entitled **The Virgin**. He called Our Lady: "our tainted nature's solitary boast." And so she is.

We celebrate Mary's birth in September because we celebrate her conception nine months before in December. Conceived without sin in the womb of her mother, the Immaculate One is made visible and for the first time we see her. She is full of Life, no sin; full of grace and joy, no trace of sadness or sickness. Human in every way, an image of great Hope. As we celebrate her birth in the coming days, I encourage you to imagine Mary as a baby. Spend some time holding her in your arms, loving her as a child. Such a practice can stir great graces in our hearts and can help us to grow in grace with her. One of the famous poems about Mary ---**Lovely Lady Dressed in Blue**--- originated in a 1926 children's book entitled A Child on His Knees. I encourage you to look that up and pray it.

Finally, I share some quotes from our Archbishop. At his installation in February, before COVID, he preached about hope and the work of the Holy Spirit. Pray with these quotes and ready your hearts that as we begin September, the work of God in us may grow and we become day-by-day a people of great hope.

- "What is hope, and what does hope look like? We know what the definition of hope is like in a dictionary...a feeling of expectation, a desire for a certain thing to happen, that's how the dictionary defines it...Sometimes hope is just wishful thinking. I hope that I will weigh 30 lbs less in a month - wishful thinking."
- "Christian hope is rooted in the resurrection of Christ. Where is the source of hope? Not in us, not in the self-help section of the bookstore. The source of our hope is Christ, the same Christ who walked the planet, who rose from the dead...At the very core of our Christian faith is a basic reality, a truth...Someone asked me, with everything going on in the Church and the world, do you have hope? And I said to this person: Listen, I gave my life to a faith that believes that a dead man rose from the dead. Yes, I have hope...This is the foundation of our Christian faith, this hope, that no matter how dark it gets, no matter how much it appears that it is the end, it is not."

"Never underestimate the power of the Spirit of God working in you, through you, and despite you!"

Peace,

Fr. Rogers