

Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church

*January 18th/January 19th 2025: Second Sunday of Ordinary Time (English)
Second Sunday After Epiphany (Latin)*



**1460 Pearson Avenue SW
Birmingham, Alabama 35211
Phone: (205) 785-9840**

**E-mail: church@myblessedsacrament.org
Website: www.myblessedsacrament.org**

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.

IN MEMORIAM: For Avery Brouard, the sanctuary lamp will burn for the repose of his soul from January 19th to January 25th. The sanctuary lamp will burn for the repose of Doris Klein from January 26th until February 1st.

SECOND COLLECTION TODAY: Recently, a mission house of the Franciscan Poor of Jesus Christ in the South of Brazil was severely damaged by destructive storms. The estimated cost for repairs is around \$3,300. A second collection for this cause will be taken today. If you would like to donate, please donate cash or make checks payable to Blessed Sacrament Catholic Church and be sure to indicate that your donation is for the Sisters of the Poor of Jesus Christ.

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

CONTRIBUTION ENVELOPES FOR 2025: Contribution envelopes are located in the back vestibule. If yours are not there, let Fr Booth know.

FIRST COMMUNION: We tentatively scheduled our First Communion on March 30th, Gaudete Sunday, at the 10:45 Mass. Opportunities for first confession will be announced.

PRIESTHOOD DISCERNMENT: The Office of Vocations is hosting a Priesthood Discernment Weekend at Casa Maria Retreat Center from February 7th- 9th. Father Andrew Gutierrez from Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans will lead this weekend of prayer, talks, and fellowship for men discerning a call to priesthood. Father Wyman Vinton, Vicar for Vocations, will be present and available to answer questions about discernment, the application process, and seminary life. This weekend experience is for men ages 18-35. The event is free, but registration is required at <https://bhmdiocese.org/discernment-weekend>

CATHOLIC CHARITIES: The Bishop’s Annual Appeal continues. You can return your pledge card or pledge via catholiccharitiesbhm.org. Our goal for this year is \$28,000. So far, Blessed Sacrament has pledged \$28,035 and thus exceeding our goal.

PERPETUAL ADORATION: Our Lady of Sorrows in Homewood is inviting people to come and adore our Lord in the Eucharist. They have had 24/7/365 Eucharistic Adoration for over 30 years. If you are interested in adoring Jesus in the Eucharist, please contact Bo Lovell at (205) 965-3041.

PRAY FOR OUR SEMINARIANS: Please pray for our seminarians: Patrick DePew, Max Gallegos, John Gardiner, Collins Hess, John Paul Stepnowski, Andrew Vickery, Hunter Limbaugh, Adam Sellers, Francisco Rodriguez, Justin Brouillette, Cameron Huhlein, Patrick Letterle, Wilson Moin, Joshua Callahan, Michael Masny, Ross Gilliland, Franz Mercado, Thomas Rogers, Nick Smith, Benjamin Caruna, Matthew Pickard, Maximilian Waldron, Dominic Rumore, Matthew Gagnon, and Friar Apollo.

PARISH SUPPORT: The collection last week was \$3992 and \$80 was given for the Preservation Fund. As always, many thanks for your generosity.

NOTE ON MASS INTENTIONS: There is about a 7-month backlog on Mass Intentions. Thus, requested Mass dates cannot always be honored.

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

Sat, Jan 18:	9:15 a.m.	Special intention for Blaise Hahn (by the Gagnon Family)
	4:00 p.m.	Special intention for Mary Shields (by Monica Duvall)
Sun, Jan 19:	7:30 a.m.	Special intention for Phil McReynolds (by the Duvall Family)
	9:00 a.m.	Pro Populo
	10:45 a.m.	Special intention for Paris Duvall (by the Duvall Family)
Mon, Jan 20	*8:30 a.m.	Special intention for Mary Teresa Fernandes (by the Gagnons)
Tues, Jan 21:	*8:30 a.m.	Special intention for Margaret Pohorelsky (by the Gagnons)
Wed, Jan 22:	*8:30 a.m.	Special intention for Joseph Ducote (by the Duvall Family)
Thur, Jan 23:	*8:30 a.m.	Special intention for John Luke Brueggen (by the Duvall Family)
Fri, Jan 24:	*8:30 a.m.	Private intention
Sat, Jan 25:	4:00 p.m.	Private intention
Sun, Jan 26:	7:30 a.m.	Special intention for Nicholas Tate (by the Rumore Family)
	9:00 a.m.	Pro Populo
	10:45 a.m.	Special intention for Nathan Tate (by the Rumore Family)

PLEASE PRAY FOR THE SICK AND HOMEBOUND especially Grace Hill, Stan Hartdegen, Kent Graeve, Phillip McCarty, Justin Meadows, Rachel Maxwell, John Minjares, Sr., Virginia Elmer, Diane Norton, Pedro Antonio Triana, John Davis, Chorbishop Richard Saad, Deb Rankin, Debbie Booth, 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, Danny Rohling, Kay Dorion, Krissy Chism, Lamar Smith, Wayne Little, Maria Morin, 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.	3 rd Sunday of Ordinary Time	Neh 8:2-4,5-6,8-10, 1Cor 12:12-30, Lk 1:1-4;4:14-21
7:30 a.m.	3 rd Sunday After Epiphany	Rom 12:16-21, Mt 8:1-13
9:00 a.m.	3 rd Sunday of Ordinary Time	Neh 8:2-4,5-6,8-10, 1Cor 12:12-30, Lk 1:1-4;4:14-21
10:45 a.m.	3 rd Sunday After Epiphany	Rom 12:16-21, Mt 8:1-13

Reborn in Baptism

The necessity of baptism is questioned or even denied by many Christians today. This largely stems from the false doctrine of salvation by faith alone. It is accurate to say that we are saved by Jesus alone and by grace alone, but the idea of salvation by faith alone does not square with Scripture. Yes, faith is indispensable and truly essential, but it is not sufficient for our salvation. For example, when Jesus dialogues with Nicodemus in the third chapter of John's Gospel, He stresses that entrance into the Kingdom of God comes from rebirth from above: Jesus says "*Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*" Nicodemus said to him, *'How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?'* Jesus answered, *'Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you, You must be born anew'*" (Jn 3:3-7).

So, rebirth from above is necessary – *'You must be born anew'* – to enter the Kingdom of God, not a physical or worldly birth, but a spiritual rebirth. This rebirth is mentioned earlier in John's Gospel, in the introductory verses of the first chapter, namely "*He came to his own home, and his own people received him not. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God; who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God*" (Jn 1:11-13). These verses clarify what it means to be born anew or from above, that is, to be born of God. It is not a birth into or from a bloodline (such as being a descendant of Abraham or of any other patriarch), it is not a natural birth according to the operation of the flesh (through human biology), nor is it a birth brought about by human deliberation. No, it is a birth making humans into children of God, something not possible through ancestry, biological procreation, or by man's willing it.

Again, some are prone to say that this rebirth is merely faith empowered by the Holy Spirit. It is easy to claim that we only need to receive or accept Jesus and have faith to be reborn. Taken in isolation, the verses of John 1:11-13 suggest, but not explicitly state, that faith and acceptance of Jesus bring about rebirth. But when Jesus says in His dialogue with Nicodemus "*unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God*" it is clear that the rebirth is not by faith alone. Yes, it is by the Spirit, but it is also of water as well. Some have tried to say that the water in question is amniotic fluid, but that makes no sense whatsoever. That is a reality of natural childbirth, not supernatural rebirth. So what does Jesus mean to be born of both water and the Spirit?

We need not look too terribly far to see how water and the Spirit are related to becoming children of God. We merely need to look to Jesus' own baptism. "*And when Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and alighting on him; and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, 'This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased'*" (Mt 3:16-17). Here we see the Spirit, the water of baptism, and the proclamation of sonship. Jesus did not need to be baptized just as John the Baptist protested, but Jesus insisted "*Let it be so now; for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness*" (Mt 3:15). Jesus already was the Son of God, He already had the Spirit, and He was righteousness incarnate. But by our birth from our own ancestry, according to the action of human biology, and by the volition of our parents, we are not children of God, we do not possess the Spirit, and we are not righteous.

To be clear, we are not saved by our works, but we are not saved apart from them. Indeed, we will be judged by our works (Mt 25:31-46, Mt 7:21-23, etc.). In his letter to Titus, St Paul makes it clear that we are not saved or reborn by our works but through baptism and the reception of the Holy Spirit: "*But when the kindness and generous love of God our savior appeared, not because of any righteous deeds we had done but because of his mercy, he saved us through the bath of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he richly poured out on us through Jesus Christ our savior, so that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life*" (Titus 3:4-7). –Fr Booth