



Society of African Missions

“The Mission”

23 Bliss Avenue
 Tenafly, NJ 07670
 Phone: 201-567-0450
 Visit our website
www.smafathers.org

Mass Schedule

Sundays

10:00 am; 12 noon

Weekdays & Holy Days

9:30 am & 11:45 am

Christmas & New Year’s Day

10:00 am; 12 noon

Confessions Saturdays:

After 11:45am Mass.

Or by appointment.

Contact Fr. James McConnell

201-567-0450 Ext. 242

Bereavement & Visit to the Sick

Contact Fr. James McConnell

201-567-0450 Ext. 242

Perpetual Mass Association

Office open Monday-Friday
 from 9:30am to 3:00pm

S.M.A. Vocation Office

Fr Dermot Roache, SMA

Director

201-256-0450 Ext. 253

S.M.A. Museum

Open Monday-Sunday from
 9:00am –5:00pm

Sunday Collection: \$754

Thank you for your support.
 Please remember to support
 your local parishes.



Administration:

Fr Ranees A. Rayappan,
 Provincial Superior

Fr James McConnell,
 House Superior

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Masses for the week of DECEMBER 3, 2023 – DECEMBER 9, 2023

Date	Time	Intention	Requested by:
Sun.-Sat.	8:00	Liv. & Dec. Benefactors of the SMA	
Sun. Dec. 3	10:00	BIRTHDAY	Buen Labay
	12:00	Virgil and Laura Costa+	Victoria Costa
Mon. Dec. 4	9:30	Memory of Mariana Cho	Juliana and Joseph Family
	11:45	Lilia R. Tocker+	Friend
Tue. Dec. 5	9:30	Theresa Tietjen+	John Tietjen
	11:45	Carmela Coppolino+	Angela and Roger Gussoni
Wed. Dec. 6	9:30	Lutgardo Atienza+ and Esther Atienza+	Family
	11:45	Nam Yae Cho Mariana+	Anna Lee
Thurs. Dec. 7	9:30	David Garcia+ & Gabriel Garcia+	
	11:45	Paddy & Margaret Murphy+	Michael Murphy
Fri. Dec. 8	9:30	Juliana Lee (Birthday) (Liv.)	Juliana and Joseph Family
	11:45	SMA FOUNDATION DAY	
Sat. Dec. 9	9:30	Gabriel Garcia+ & David Garcia	
	11:45	Gina Luppino (Liv.) (HB)	

Today’s Readings:

First Reading Isaiah 63:16-17; 64:1. 3-8

The Prophet cries out for God to tear the heavens open and come down to save us.

Second Reading 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

St Paul constantly thanks God for the graces his converts received in Corinth.

Gospel Mark 13:33-37 Jesus entrusts the Church, his followers, with our own special tasks as we live out our personal Christian vocations.

Friday, December 8, 2023 - SMA Foundation Day (167th Anniversary).

Join us at 11:45am Mass

- Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Day of Obligation)

“Let your face shine on us and we shall be saved.”

Illustration

“O that you would tear the heavens open and come down!” This desperate cry for help is heard wherever war, violence and the breakdown of order inflicts terror and suffering on innocent people. It is heard in the silent, sobbing pleas of millions in refugee camps; human beings surviving in terrible conditions. These are the people the Church asks us to remember and pray for today, Migrants’ Sunday. The urgent appeal for God to sort out the mess of human affairs, “to tear the heavens and come down to save us”, is the constant plea of the Old Testament prophets, the prophets to whom pay attention in Advent. This appeal comes from the Prophet Isaiah in our first reading: why doesn’t God stop all this evil?

“Why, Lord, leave us to stray from your ways?” Isaiah goes on. “Return for the sake of your servants.” Isaiah continues to cry out for the sake of all who are suffering; people close to us or maybe in our own family; neighbours and friends who sometimes have a secret anguish in their heart, like someone who has been hurt and damaged in childhood. “Return for the sake of your servants.” Isaiah goes on. “Why, Lord, leave us to stray from your ways?” That is the cry of someone who longs to find the way forward. “You hid your face from us and gave us up to the power of our sins.” This is the cry of many a recidivist criminal who goes back to prison again and again, too weak to change. Or it can be the crushed and tearful prayer of an addict, someone addicted, perhaps, to gambling or drugs or alcohol.

Gospel Teaching

“O that you would tear the heavens and come down!” But God has. Isaiah’s prayer was heard. God did tear the heavens and come down. God was born of the Blessed Virgin Mary. He has not left us to stray from his ways: he came to be our Good Shepherd who seeks out the stray, saves the lost sheep, bandages the wounded, makes the weak strong; someone who doesn’t just teach us, but who puts out his hand to save us.

St Paul was one of the first he saved. Converted by a blinding light Paul suddenly realised that Christ had set him free from his awful past. It no longer controlled him and he began living in a new way for Christ, saving others like himself. In the reading today, he exudes a strong confidence. Jesus Christ “will keep you steady and without blame until the last day, the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, because God by calling you has joined you to his Son, Jesus Christ, and God is faithful.”

The last day is, of course, the day when he will return. Meanwhile, as Jesus says in the Gospel today, it is as though he has now gone abroad, leaving his servants in charge, each with their own tasks. To his servants, the Church, he gives the task of proclaiming the message of salvation, and for 2000 years, both the Church and individual Christians have been so doing, bringing hope and help to others. People do repent like Paul and change. Sometimes world leaders listen to the Pope. When they are deaf, he never stops calling to them, like Isaiah.

Application

When it comes to individuals crying out for help, the Church, (our Christian communities and parishes) is there. By evangelisation we bring them salvation, as Paul did to those who were not Christians, or deepen the lives of those who are. And we also offer our love to help people, maybe at some personal cost, especially when they are falling apart or sick.

Pope Francis, in his call for Synodality, is asking us to increase the sense of community in our parishes, to watch out for people, to be aware when they need our help. The Collect, with which Mass began, is not empty words but a real prayer: “Grant your faithful, we pray, almighty God, the resolve to run forth to meet Christ with righteous deeds... so that we may be worthy to possess the heavenly kingdom.” We mostly do this quietly on our own. But sometimes righteous deeds are better done with others in the Church working together. God has torn the heavens open and come down. He has not left us straying from his ways. Jesus Christ is our life, our way, our hope! Let us rise and follow him as we wait for his return!

Living the Word