



## Our Lady of Sorrows

Traditional Catholic Mission Central Texas

**Upcoming Mass Details:**  
To Be Announced for January 2022

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### *Note From Father*

Dear Faithful,

Merry Christmas everyone! It was actually quite mild in Cincinnati, but I am off to colder climates as I write this letter to you all. We refer to the start of major liturgical times as “entering the tunnel”, as there is a lot of ground to be covered, you don’t really have time to work on too much else, and all you can do is move forward from one ceremony to another until you reach the other end of the “tunnel”. Our Christmas tunnel began at 6:30 AM Christmas Eve, with the chanting of the office of Prime, including its beautiful fancy tone for the beginning of the martyrology. Later, we had a nice crowd for the Christmas Eve High Mass and we were officially underway. The Christmas Vespers, Candlelit Matins, Carols, and Midnight High Mass.... Beauty can only begin to describe these ceremonies. They are truly some of my favorites of the whole year.

But the tunnel doesn’t end after the midnight Mass. At St. Gertrude’s, we have a string quartet come in to play Christmas songs at the 9:00 AM Mass, followed by benediction. For me, my tunnel included an early morning wake up call to go to the airport and fly to North Dakota, with a layover in... Dallas??!! (Come-on American Airlines). The pilot announced that it is snowing at the airport in Fargo and the temperature is 4 degrees. At least I will have a white Christmas. Tonight, I will offer the three Christmas Masses at our little chapel in Grand Forks for all the faithful. It has become our annual tradition up there. And the faithful of Grand Forks certainly deserve such a tradition. For so many years they patiently deal with the reality and trials of being a mission location...odd Mass times and days, last minute changes and cancelation, more spiritual communions than actual communions, etc. But all the while, they remain faithful and grateful for the spiritual gifts they are able to receive and understand it is an effect of the times we live in. And so, I happily awake and bound away to the airport early Christmas morn.

In Christ,

Fr. McKenna

## \*\*Calendars\*\*

The calendars for 2022 have arrived at St. Gertrude's. If you would like to purchase a calendar, you can go to [sggresources.org](http://sggresources.org) or call or email our office at St. Gertrude's.

### Christmas Thoughts

#### SEVEN PRESENCES IN THE MIDNIGHT CAVE

1. The Beasts
2. The Manger
3. The Straw
4. The Darkness
5. The Cold
6. The Mother
7. The Foster Father

#### SEVEN PRESENCES IN THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

1. Poverty
2. Abandonment
3. Rejection
4. Secrecy
5. Mortification
6. Mercy
7. Prayer

### Christmas From Pope St. Leo the Great

Our Savior, dearly beloved, is born today; let us rejoice. It is not right to be sad today, the natal day of Life--He Who has dispelled the fear of mortality and brought us to the joy of promised eternity. Let no man be cut off from a share in this rejoicing. The cause of our joy is common to every man, because our Lord, the destroyer of sin and death, Who finds none guiltless, comes to free all. Let the holy exult, he draws near his palm; let the sinner rejoice, he is invited to pardon; let the Gentile be quickened, he is called to life. For the Son of God, in the fulness of that time which the unsearchable height of Divine Wisdom decreed, assumed human nature to reconcile it with its Author, and conquer the devil, the inventor of death, through that flesh which he had conquered.

In this conflict, which He joined for our sake, Our Lord entered the field of battle with a great and wonderful fairness. Although He was the almighty Lord, He met our bitter enemy not with the strength of His majesty, but with the weakness of our flesh. He brought against him the self-same form as ours; the self-same nature as our nature--but in him, without sin. Not of this Nativity were written the words applied to all other men: Not one is free from defilement, no, not the child whose life on earth is but one day. Into this singular birth passed none of the concupiscences of the flesh, nor followed any consequences of the law of sin. A Virgin of the royal stem of David is chosen, and when she was to become pregnant with the Sacred Child, Who was both God and Man, she conceived Him in her soul before she conceived Him in her body. Lest the stupendous mystery might make her afraid, since she had no knowledge of the Divine plan, she learned by the message of an Angel what was to be done in

her by the Holy Ghost. She believed she would be the Mother of God, yet remain a virgin inviolate.

Therefore, dearly beloved, let us give thanks to God the Father, through His Son in the Holy Ghost, Who for His exceeding charity, wherewith he loved us, hath had mercy on us, and even when we were dead in sins hath quickened us together in Christ, that in Him we might be a new creature and a new handiwork. Therefore, let us put off the old man with his works, and having become sharers in the Sonship of Christ, renounce the deeds of the flesh. Learn, O Christian, how great is your dignity! You have been made a partaker in the divine nature. Scorn to return to your former vileness through an evil way of life. Remember of Whose body you are a member, and Who is its head. Remember that you have been snatched from the power of darkness, and transported into light and the kingdom of God.

### *A Prayer to St. Stephen*

Saint Stephen, whom I have chosen as my special patron, pray for me that I, too, may one day glorify the Blessed Trinity in heaven. Obtain for me your lively faith, that I may consider all persons, things, and events in the light of almighty God. Pray, that I may be generous in making sacrifices of temporal things to promote my eternal interests, as you so wisely did.

Set me on fire with a love for Jesus, that I may thirst for His sacraments and burn with zeal for the spread of His kingdom. By your powerful intercession, help me in the performance of my duties to God, myself and all the world.

Win for me the virtue of purity and a great confidence in the Blessed Virgin. Protect me this day, and every day of my life. Keep me from mortal sin. Obtain for me the grace of a happy death. Amen

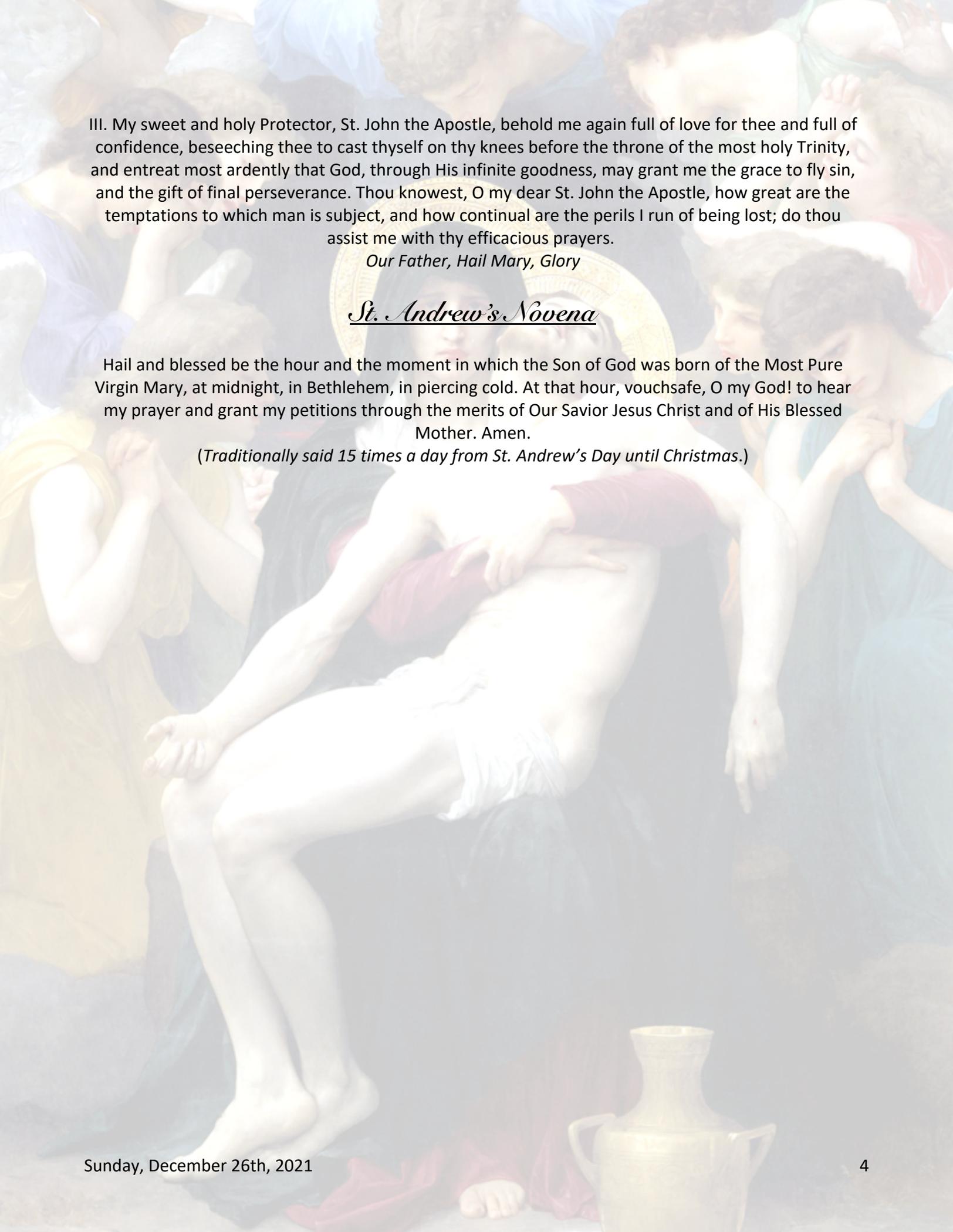
### *Novena Prayer to St. John*

. My most loving Saint, St. John the Apostle, behold me kneeling at thy feet, beseeching thee with all the affection of my heart to grant me thy special protection, particularly when in danger of offending God. O my dear and holy advocate, remember me before the throne of the most holy Trinity, and obtain for me from the infinite goodness of God, the virtues of humility, purity, obedience, and the grace to fulfill exactly the duties of my state.

*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory*

II. O my dear Saint, St. John the Apostle, I renew to the Lord, through thee, the holy resolutions which I have frequently made of intending to love and serve Him faithfully. I am resolved to detach myself from every earthly thing, and I desire ardently to unite myself to Him, as my first beginning, last end, and sovereign good. My dear Saint, I beseech thee to offer to the most holy Trinity the sacrifice of my whole being, particularly of my judgment and will, in order to conform fully to God most holy, because I desire nothing else besides His grace and His holy love.

*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory*



III. My sweet and holy Protector, St. John the Apostle, behold me again full of love for thee and full of confidence, beseeching thee to cast thyself on thy knees before the throne of the most holy Trinity, and entreat most ardently that God, through His infinite goodness, may grant me the grace to fly sin, and the gift of final perseverance. Thou knowest, O my dear St. John the Apostle, how great are the temptations to which man is subject, and how continual are the perils I run of being lost; do thou assist me with thy efficacious prayers.

*Our Father, Hail Mary, Glory*

### *St. Andrew's Novena*

Hail and blessed be the hour and the moment in which the Son of God was born of the Most Pure Virgin Mary, at midnight, in Bethlehem, in piercing cold. At that hour, vouchsafe, O my God! to hear my prayer and grant my petitions through the merits of Our Savior Jesus Christ and of His Blessed Mother. Amen.

*(Traditionally said 15 times a day from St. Andrew's Day until Christmas.)*