In the Gather hymnal the order of the Mass is number 134, readings number 900.
Baptism: This weekend the Christmas season comes to an end and Ordinary Time begins for the New Year. Back in November, the Last Sunday in Ordinary Time was marked with a feast celebrating an important characteristic about Jesus, namely the Solemnity of Christ the King. This weekend we again mark another important aspect in Christ’s life with the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. Although this Monday is considered the First Week in Ordinary Time, the Baptism of the Lord is seldom, if ever, referred to officially as the First Sunday in Ordinary Time. In some ways, this Feast represents the climax of the Christmas Season and so could be recognized as the Last Sunday of Christmas. Yet, it also marks the beginning of the public ministry of Jesus and His entrance into the “ordinary” life of humanity. In a sense, the Baptism of the Lord straddles the Christmas and Ordinary Seasons. It is neither of them AND it is both of them. The very fact that this Feast is the end of one thing and the beginning of another gives us a peek into the mystery that Jesus would spend His life uncovering and ultimately revealing in His Passion, Death, and Resurrection. It is the paradox of the Cross: life gives way to death which in turn gives way to life. The ending contains the beginning. And THAT is what our baptism is about. But more about that later.

First, let’s consider what this weekend’s liturgy tells us. The story of Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan River by his “cousin” John is found in the gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke. This year we use Luke’s account which gives it only a brief mention. The other two accounts provide more details about the encounter between Jesus and John. But all three describe the appearance of the Holy Spirit and the revelation of Jesus as the Son of God. As usual, John’s Gospel takes a different approach. John the Evangelist doesn’t actually mention that John the Baptist baptized Jesus, but he reports that the Baptist witnessed the revelation of the Spirit’s descent on Jesus and added it to his testimony about Him. All four gospels point out the fact that John the Baptist made a distinction between what he (the Baptist) was doing and what the Messiah would do. John admits that his own baptism is not as good as that of “the one who is to come.”

So what is it that Jesus submitted Himself to at the Jordan and how does it fit in with what Jesus would ultimately do? What John was doing was not an innovation. The idea of a ceremonial cleansing was part of the initiation procedures for groups that wished to set themselves apart for some special purpose. By undergoing this ritual bath, participants expressed their willingness to leave behind their former way of life, to wash away the influence of the world they wished to leave behind. It was an outward expression of their inner disposition. This was the baptism that John preached, urging people to repent, join him in awaiting the Messiah and preparing “the way of the Lord.” Jesus obviously had no need for repentance. So John is reluctant to baptize Him and suggests that their roles should be reversed. But by accepting John’s baptism, Jesus gave His support to John’s endeavor by becoming a part of it. It is at the core of Jesus’ mission to immerse Himself in human experiences before He transforms them. Thus, this feast is another expression of the Incarnation of God’s Son becoming a human. The voice from heaven and the Spirit descending like a dove is comparable to the angels appearing to the shepherds or the Star to the Magi.

But here is also where the nature of baptism begins to change. Throughout His ministry, Jesus would take ordinary human experiences and transform them into vehicles for God to share His life. Although all of human life is transformed by the presence of Jesus, the Church has set aside seven specific moments when a human activity is joined to a divine action. We call these moments the Sacraments. They begin where the ministry of Jesus began, with the simple act of washing. But in this human experience of being washed, it is God who bathes us in His new life of Grace. The water of our Sacramental Baptism is the “solvent” that blends our human life to God’s life. Water itself is a powerful symbol of the Mystery of the Cross which is at the heart of our faith. Water is essential for life, but water can also bring destruction and death (e.g. floods, drownings, etc.). Here, life and death, the beginning and the end, are joined together. The real source of our baptism, then, is not what John did at the Jordan, but what Jesus did on Calvary, for we were “baptized into His death” and in His Resurrection we were given new life.

Fr. Mike Turlan
MASS INTENTIONS

Monday, January 11—Weekday
6:45 AM, 8:30 AM, Mass:
Fern Sink, Diane Jordan, Joseph Riccordingo

Tues, January 12—Weekday
6:45 AM Communion Service & 8:30 AM Mass:
William Raymond

Wednesday, January 13—Weekday
6:45 AM, 8:30 AM, Masses:
Irene Guth, The Dollear Family

Thursday, January 14—Weekday
6:45 AM, 8:30 AM Masses:
Leonard Griffiths, William Raymond, Mario A. Passamba,
Florence C. Angeles, Sophia M. DeVera

Friday, January 15—Weekday
7:00 AM, 9:00 AM & 11:00 AM Masses:
Mary T. Byrnes, Ray Ristow

Saturday, January 16—Weekday
8:30 AM—Marion Kruczek, Dorothy Noonan
4:00 PM—Dorothy Soss, Poor Souls in Purgatory,
Ellie Smith (blessings)

Sunday, January 17—2nd Sunday in Ordinary Time
7:00 AM—Rose Perfetti, Agnes A. Kleczewski
9:00 AM—Dorothy Soss, Frances Cichowicz, Chester Kabat
11:00 AM—Dorothy Soss, Norb Randich, Bridget Bottom

REMEMBER OUR BELOVED DEAD

Richard Wren Jr.  Earl A. Paraday
Joseph Plante   Jeanne Dunne

Please pray for those who are sick, their families and caregivers, including:
Hattie Balutis, Rose Barsevick, Mary Battaglia,
Robert Cahill, Sherry Hardek-Cohen, Paul Cullen,
Ramiro Cumpian, Mary Earley, Marie Farella,
Fran Genender, Jan Gorman, John Hardek,
Kaitlyn Hedderman, Elaine Hicks, Rose Iaquinta,
John Kappel, Dennis Kelsch, Richard Kita,
Vince Kotlarz, David Krause, Genevieve Ksiazek,
LaVerne Lewandowski, Ray Lynch, Rita Martin,
Brenna McNamara, Onas Mezinkas, Mario Minervini,
Sharon Nowobielski, Sr. Maria O’Leary,
Harriet Partyka, Sonny Phelan, Maggie Powers,
Jean Renken, Helene Ruplanski, John Ryan,
Norma Salas, Gerry Setzke, Dorothy Skawinsky,
Rita Daniels Suchor, Lillian Spiewak, Charles Staske,
Marcella Sullivan, Bob Szewczyk, Patty Tapia,
Ann Marie Toloza, Mary Ann Trop,
Casey Wiedenski, Julie Zakarka

2016 MASS BOOK
The 2016 Mass book is open. Please look for forms at the entrances of church. We still have plenty of openings for this year. We now have Mass cards for healing, birthday & anniversaries. Stop by the parish center to schedule your masses.
Parish Prayer for January
(To be prayed during all parish meetings this month.)
Lord, may we hold onto the love and joy of the Christmas Season throughout this New Year 2016 As we settle back into ordinary time, and to dealing with the cold and the work that come with winter, help us to carry warmth within our hearts and to bring that warmth to all we meet—especially those most in need.
As we celebrate peace on the first of the year, let us remember that peace begins in our own hearts and homes, and that it is our duty to take that peace to the larger community. Please, Lord, bring peace to war-torn areas and send all troops home safely and soon. Inspire us with the story of the Epiphany; help us identify with the magi. May we recognize your sign, have the confidence to follow it, and bring with us all the gifts and talents we have to serve you.
We pray in your name, Jesus Christ, our Lord and brother. Amen.

PRAYER SHawl MINISTRY
Do you know someone with, or recovering from a serious or chronic illness, someone facing surgery, someone who is grieving, someone who needs prayers to comfort and strengthen them?
If you do, please consider giving that person a Prayer Shawl from St. Germaine. The recipients of the shawls are uplifted by the love and prayers that go into creating a Prayer Shawl. There is no cost for a shawl. All you have to do is arrange to pick it up at the Parish Center and deliver it to the person in need. Just give us the name of the person who will receive the Prayer Shawl so that we can add their name to our (unpublished) prayer list.
To request a Prayer Shawl, call 636-5060.

PLEASE HELP!
During this year of Mercy, are you looking for a way to serve God? Would you like to find a ministry where you get back more than you give? One of the corporal works of mercy is caring for the sick. We are in desperate need of volunteers to bring communion to our homebound parishioners. That requires an hour of your time one Sunday a month. We also need volunteers to visit parishioners at Christ Hospital. That is a weekly commitment. If you are able to help please call Kath Rimac at 636-6647.
Thank you and God bless you!

Parishioners, we want to personally invite you to spend some time before our Lord Jesus in the Blessed Eucharist. The Eucharistic Presence of Jesus is in all Catholic Church's as the Sacred Host is reserved in the Tabernacle and in our parish there is a special chapel devoted to Adoration of the exposed Blessed Sacrament.

 Personally Jesus has blessed and touched us in a special way through Adoration. You can say a prayer before Him or use a devotional or simply remain in the loving silence of our Lord's presence. The fact that you are there is a prayer in of itself because you show your love and belief of the source and summit of our Catholic faith, that is Jesus the Risen Lord is truly and substantially present Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity in the Blessed Eucharist. Jesus awaits your visit. You can come before Him any time because He is there in the tabernacle. So please find some time to spend an hour, a half hour, 15 minutes or make a short visit to our Adoration Chapel located in our cry room Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday 9am till 8pm.

How awesome this gift in which Jesus our Lord and God is present here in the Eucharist. How awesome our Lord is to give us this way to approach our living God. Do you realize the awesome gift you have in Jesus present in the Blessed Eucharist? What will keep you away from the gift of our Lord who awaits you to spend a little time adoring him in the Eucharist?

Please look into your hearts and pray about this and try to make some time to come to adore Jesus in the Eucharist. For those who already come we thank you from the bottom of our hearts. For those who cannot come because of physical limitations, work, etc., your intentions are in our prayers before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. For those who can come please try to find some time to come.
We are in Need of Adorers for: Wednesday 9-10am and Thursdays 5-6, 6-7, and 7-8pm May God continue to Bless you.

In Jesus our Eucharistic Lord, St Germaine Adoration Committee
Pope Francis invites us to follow Christ by performing Works of Mercy.

During Advent we extended our generosity by sharing our financial resources with various organizations in the parish who help serve those in need. A great example of Corporal Works of Mercy. To continue the celebration of the Jubilee of Mercy we are inviting our parishioners to extend themselves through examples of Spiritual Works of Mercy. Using the same format of the Marion tree, we will put tags on the tree in the vestibule, on the Jubilee door, and on the bulletin boards. These tags will display various and specific examples of the Spiritual Works of Mercy. Please take a tag or two and follow the instructions on the tag. Some will have names of people who are homebound and in need of prayer, some will have the names of those who have been buried through our parish during the year of 2015. Other tags will give you examples to counsel, visit, instruct, forgive, and offer patience toward those in your own life. Please take a tag and perform the Work of Mercy written on the tag throughout the month of January, or beyond. Below is a brief explanation of each of the Work of Mercy to help guide you.

1. To **COUNSEL THE DOUBTFUL** is to give someone who is unsettled in their personal life sage advice concerning prayer and meditation to help a person understand how God’s grace works in his/her life.

2. **INSTRUCT THE INGNORANT** means to teach the unlearned. We do some of our best teaching without even opening up our mouths! Be authentic. Live your Catholic identity fully in faith, hope and charity, so that people are attracted to the Spirit of God within you.

3. To **ADMONISH SINNERS** means, first of all, to call someone to conversion. Jesus Himself did this from the very outset of His public ministry when He proclaimed, "The Kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the Good News!" (Mk :15)

4. **COMFORT THE AFFLICTED**, “Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Mt 11:28). We should not be afraid of our suffering, but take it to Christ and sometimes that means we need to take it to the “Christs” in our midst. It takes great courage to listen and not try to solve the problem. Sometimes we just need to “suffer with” that person in order to comfort them.

5. **FORGIVE OFFENSES** means that in the depths of our heart, we know that we do not always act as the person God has created us to be. This work of mercy calls us to let go of our pride and hurt in order to relieve others of the burden of having offended us.

6. **BEAR WRONGS PATIENTLY** means, “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you” (Mt 5:44) Deal kindly with people who do thoughtless things, don’t enter the cycle of revenge and keep hatred breeding by adding our own.

7. **PRAY FOR THE LIVING AND THE DEAD** means simply that, to pray for those who are sick and for those who have died.
**Split the Pot drawing:**

On, December 27th envelope #2137 was pulled. The parishioner assigned that number did not participate in the raffle. On January 3rd envelope # 1464 was pulled. The parishioner assigned that number made at least the minimum contribution to both the Sunday and “Split the Pot” collections and is the winner of $4,162.50. Congratulations!

**STEWARDSHIP REPORT**

Our 2014-2015 parish budget requires a weekly offertory collection of $16,200. Please be generous in your support of our parish ministries and services.

**January 3, 2016**

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Thank you for your generous support of St. Germaine Parish.

Please remember your parish in your will.

**Choir News:**

A huge THANK YOU! to members of the children and adult choirs for singing so beautifully for these past Masses and Christmas Concert-so proud of you!!

**Our practices begin again on Wednesday, January 20th.** The schedule is as follows:

St. Germaine children meet right after school on Wednesdays from 2:30pm to 3:45pm.

Religious Education children meet on Wednesdays from 4:30pm to 5:30pm.

Adult Choir meets on Wednesdays from 7:30pm to 9:00pm.

All rehearsals are in the church. We will be preparing for Masses, Lent, Easter and our Spring Concert in May. Did I mention a field trip and party at the end of the year for our groups? Please consider joining us in the beauty and fun that is singing for your parish!

If you have any questions, contact Terri Lenz, Director of Music (708)421-0887 or thereselzen@aol.com.

**Spring Soccer is around the corner...time to get prepared for St. Germaine's biggest sport...come join in the fun!!!**

**Spring Soccer Registration**

Where: Gym lobby

When: Sunday, January 17th, 5:00pm to 7:00pm & Monday, January 18th, 6:00 to 8:00pm

Who: **St. Germaine Parish boys and girls** Pre-K through 8th grade

Fees: Pre-K/Kindergarten: $50

1st through 8th: $65

Uniform* (if needed): $40 (includes jersey, shorts and socks) **order deadline Sunday, January 24th**

Registrations received after January 18th will incur a $25 late fee.

Please contact Coach Cavé at coachcave.nemevacsc@gmail.com if you have any questions.

**WEIGHT WATCHERS**

If your New Year’s resolution is to get healthy, you’re invited to attend an open house on Tuesday, January 12th.

The new Weight Watchers program focuses on more than just a number on the scale. Find the support and motivation you need to create healthier eating habits and get in shape. Make 2016 the year to improve your life!

**WHEN:** Tuesday, January 12th at 6:30pm

**WHERE:** Sheridan Room at St. Germaine (98th & Kolin)

Call 708-636-5060 for further information.
Did you know?

One of the most difficult tasks I encounter occurs when meeting with families who are unable to deal with the impending death of a loved one. Time after time I witness families who insist that ‘everything be done’ to keep their loved one alive. I still struggle when I am accompanying families, where both the hospital staff and families have different ideas about what should be done, while attempting to do what they believe is best for the patient. Recently I read a thought provoking article by Harvey Max Chochinov, who wrote “A meaningful dying process is one during which the patient is physically, psychologically, spiritually, and emotionally supported by his or her family, friends, and caregivers,” This is more easily attained if the patient carefully details their desires while they are still well and able to express their wishes.

Perhaps the very best way to avoid problems is by encouraging those who are well to make their intentions known to their families before they reach a terminal stage and are unable to speak for themselves. This can be accomplished by creating legal documents such as Living Wills, Health Care Power of Attorney and/or Five Wishes, on which the family focuses when trying to make good decisions for their loved one.

Each of these forms of Advanced Directives tell your doctor and your family what kind of care you would like or would not like to have if you become unable to make your own medical decisions.

Living Wills take effect only when you are terminally ill, generally with six months or less to live. While they give some information about your wishes, I find living wills to be not appropriate for the majority of illnesses, so I suggest completing a healthcare power of attorney (HCPOA), rather than a living will.

Health Care Power of Attorney is a document that allows you to appoint a person to make your medical decisions, if you are unable to do so. Additionally, while you can have only one person as HCPOA, it allows you to designate both a second and a third person to act, if your HCPOA is unable to complete the task. The most important feature of HCPOA is a listing of two statements for you to choose from indicating the level of care you want your HCPOA to elect for you. These choices are: I want to be kept alive, using any and all extraordinary means until I die OR I want to be kept comfortable and relieved of pain, but do not want extraordinary means provided.

- Five Wishes is a newer document that comes in booklet form and allows you to indicate your preference in these five areas.
  1. Who will make medical decisions for you.
  2. What medical treatment is desired and which is refused.
  3. What types of comfort you desire.
  4. How you want to be treated by those caring for you.
  5. What information you want to leave for your loved ones.

Each of these three forms of advanced directives can be completed by you when you are hospitalized; generally with the help of the hospital chaplain. Please remember that this information is only for health care. All other directives must be handled through you lawyer, who also can prepare your healthcare power of attorney, if you wish.

Have you made your wishes known to your family? Perhaps, now would be a good time! We will offer a workshop on Sunday, January 10 in the Sheridan Room, after the 11:00 Mass to complete HCPOA forms for anyone who is interested.

Mary Anne Cannon
Thank you all so much for your generous support this past Christmas season.

Marion Tree was a huge success. Over the last 11 years I had the privilege to work by the side of Marion Krucek, helping her sort and distribute to those in need. This year was bitter sweet without her, but I felt her by my side as all of your donations poured in.

To see the outpouring of generosity was absolutely amazing! Helping those in need was wonderful. We were able to help over 133 families in so many ways.

With all of your support and the help of Jewel Osco on 95th & Pulaski, we were also able to provide 133 families with holiday dinners. All of this along with the continued support of the pantry made such a difference for all those we helped and continue to help.

We would like to share a few of the thank you notes we have received;

“Dear Parish Members and Staff,
On behalf of myself and my family, I wanted to say thank you for taking the time and giving us the resources to help us through this difficult time. Through many hardships long ago, I lost my way. But I now see the goodness of God through strangers.
Thank you so much! I will pass on the kindness as soon as I am able.”

“Dear friends of St. Germaine. Thank you so much for all of your support during this difficult time. And a special thank you for the Jewel and gas cards-it was very much appreciated!”

“St. Germaine Parish, I cannot express how thankful I am for your generosity this holiday season. Without your help, I would not have been able to give my children anything. The dinner and gift cards were such a blessing. God bless you all.”

“My family and I are so grateful for being part of such a wonderful parish that has been so generous to us in our time of need. Thank you!”

Thank you all for your support!

The COURAGE Christmas Gala 2015 brought much joy to our COURAGE families. Many, many thanks to the great people of St. Germaine for all the wonderful gifts and donations that helped to make for a very, Merry Christmas for approximately 500 moms and children!! May you all have a Happy and Healthy 2016!!

Come on out and support our 6 St. Germaine parishioners who will be playing!
Welcome to St. Germaine Parish!
To register in the parish, or for information about any of our organizations, ministries, services, or educational opportunities, please call the Parish Center at 636-5060 or visit our website www.stgermaine.com.