

In the manger of rejection and discomfort, God makes himself present. He comes there because there we see the problem of our humanity: the indifference produced by the greedy rush to possess and consume. There, in that manger, Christ is born, and there we discover his closeness to us. He comes there, to a feeding trough, in order to become our food. God is no father who devours his children, but the Father who, in Jesus, makes us his children and feeds us with his tender love. He comes to touch our hearts and to tell us that love alone is the power that changes the course of history. He does not remain distant and mighty, but draws near to us in humility; leaving his throne in heaven, he lets himself be laid in a manger. Dear brother, dear sister, tonight God is drawing near to you, because you are important to him. From the manger, as food for your life, he tells you: "If you feel consumed by events, if you are devoured by a sense of guilt and inadequacy, if you hunger for justice, I, your God, am with you. I know what you are experiencing, for I experienced it myself in that manger. I know your weaknesses, your failings and your history. I was born in order to tell you that I am, and always will be, close to you". The Christmas manger, the first message of the divine Child, tells us that God is with us, he loves us and he seeks us. So take heart! Do not allow yourself to be overcome by fear, resignation or discouragement. God was born in a manger so that you could be reborn in the very place where you thought you had hit rock bottom. There is no evil, there is no sin, from which Jesus does not want to save you. And he can. Christmas means that God is close to us: let confidence be reborn! The manger of Bethlehem speaks to us not only of closeness, but also of *poverty*. Around the manger there is very little: hay and straw, a few animals, little else. People were warm in the inn, but not here in the coldness of a stable. Yet that is where Jesus was born. The manger reminds us that he was surrounded by nothing but love: Mary, Joseph and the shepherds; all poor people, united by affection and amazement, not by wealth and great expectations. The poverty of the manger thus shows us where the true riches in life are to be found: not in money and power, but in relationships and persons. And the first person, the greatest wealth, is Jesus himself. Yet do we want to stand at his side? Do we draw close to him? Do we love his poverty? Or do we prefer to remain comfortably ensconced in our own interests and concerns? Above all, do we visit him where he is to be found, namely in the poor mangers of our world? For that is where he is present. We are called to be a Church that worships a Jesus who is poor and that serves him in the poor. As a saintly bishop once said: "The Church supports and blesses efforts to change the structures of injustice, and sets down but one condition: that social, economic and political change truly benefit the poor". Certainly, it is not easy to leave the comfortable warmth of worldliness to embrace the stark beauty of the grotto of Bethlehem, but let us remember that it is not truly Christmas without the poor. Without the poor, we can celebrate Christmas, but not the birth of Jesus. Dear brothers, dear sisters, at Christmas God is poor: let charity be reborn! We now come to our last point: the manger speaks to us of *concreteness*. Indeed, a child lying in a manger presents us with a scene that is striking, even crude. It reminds us that God truly became flesh. As a result, all our theories, our fine thoughts and our pious sentiments are no longer enough. Jesus was born poor, lived poor and died poor; he did not so much talk about poverty as live it, to the very end, for our sake. From the manger to the cross, his love for us was always palpable, concrete. From birth to death, the carpenter's son embraced the roughness of the wood, the harshness of our existence. He did not love us only in words; he loved us with utter seriousness! Consequently, Jesus is not satisfied with appearances. He who took on our flesh wants more than simply good intentions. He who was born in the manger, demands a concrete faith, made up of adoration and charity, not empty words and superficiality. He who lay naked in the manger and hung naked on the cross, asks us for truth, he asks us to go to the bare reality of things, and to lay at the foot of the manger all our excuses, our justifications and our hypocrisies. Tenderly wrapped in swaddling clothes by Mary, he wants us to be clothed in love. God does not want appearances but concreteness. Brothers and sisters, may we not let this Christmas pass without doing something good. Since it is his celebration, his birthday, let us give him the gifts he finds pleasing! At Christmas, God is concrete: in his name let us help a little hope to be born anew in those who feel hopeless! Jesus we behold you lying in the manger. We see you as *close*, ever at our side: thank you Lord! We see you as *poor*, in order to teach us that true wealth does not reside in things but in persons, and above all in the poor: forgive us, if we have failed to acknowledge and serve you in them. We see you as *concrete*, because your love for us is palpable. Jesus, help us to give flesh and life to our faith. Amen

Our Lady of Divine Providence **ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**

Pastor: Rev. Luis Orlando González
P. Vicar: Rev. Rafael Velázquez
P. Vicar: Rev. Paul Passant

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SOLEMNITY, MARY, MOTHER OF GOD



HOLY MASS

Saturday: 05:30 pm English, Church.

Sunday: 09:00 am English, Church.
10:30 am Creole, Church.
12:30 pm Spanish, Church.

Weekdays: 05:30 pm English, B. Chapel.

Fridays: 04:00 pm Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Rosary.

05:30 pm Blue Chapel.

SCHEDULE OF SACRAMENTS

Baptisms: Contact one of the priests in person.

Confessions: Everyday before Mass or by appointment.

Anointing of the Sick: Upon request.

Marriage: Call the parish office for preparation before setting a fixed date.

1st Communions: 11 June, 2023.

Can God have a Mother? Surely the answer is “No”. But what about today’s feast? Mary, is called ‘The Mother of God’ Why is that? It is because you are in need of salvation due to your sins. The problem is that another person cannot save you. You cannot even save yourself, let alone someone else. This means your saviour has to be more than a man. He must be God in order to save you. However, to save and redeem the human race He also needs to be a human being. Hence , our feast today. This feast is not so much about Mary as about her Son. Calling Mary, “Mother of God” means that Jesus has a mother and therefore is a human being like you, but He is also God. Hence She is Mother of God. This is the basis of all theology and the source of all the heresies in the history of the Church. This is because it is beyond our understanding how a person can be both finite, and infinite at the same time. During the 4th and 5th centuries there arose many heresies. Some saying that Jesus was just a man or that he was only divine. Both different heresies In effect deny our very salvation because Jesus needs to have both natures in order to save us. This means that God became one of us out of love. In today’s Gospel it is the shepherds who receive the good news first and they were not the best people. A shepherd’s testimony was not accepted in court or anywhere else as they were basically thieves and yet these sinners get and receive the good news of their salvation first amongst all the people on the earth. This shows us the immense mercy of God toward us all.

May all of us continue to know Jesus as the one who saves us in spite of all our sins and may we receive and believe in His merciful love for us. Fr. Paul



NEW YEAR’S SCHEDULE

January 1, Mother of God

New Year’s Eve Mass:

Dec. 31. 05:30 pm.

Jan 1.

09:00 am. English.

11:00 am. Bilingual.

Parish Events Jan. 1-8

Sunday Holy Mass: 09:00 am,11:00am,

04:00 pm Coeur de Marie Children’s group.
 05:00 pm Fraternitey, Red Room.
 05:00 pm Creole Youth Choir practice.
 05:30 pm Sacre Coeur de Jesus, P. Hall.
 05:00 pm Choeur D’hommes 1st and 3rd Sunday at church.

Monday St.s Basil and Gregory

05:30 pm D. and Mass Chapel

Tuesday Holy Name of Jesus

05:30 pm D. Mass Chapel
 07:00pm 1st English, Parish hall
 07:00pm 2nd English, SMG
 07:00pm 1st Spanish, Blue Chapel
 07:00pm 2nd Spanish, Red Room

Wednesday St. Elizabeth Seton

05:30 pm D. Mass Chapel
 07:00pm 3rd English, SMG
 07:00pm 4th English, Blue Chapel
 07:00pm 1st Creole Red Room
 07:00pm 2nd Creole Bl. Sac. Chapel

Thursday St. John Neumann

05:30 pm D. Mass Chapel

Friday

04:00pm Adoration
 5:30pm Daily Mass, Blue Chapel .

Saturday

05:30 pm Mass, Church
 07:00pm NCW Eucharist



School Notes

Holy Family Academy

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CHRISTMAS BREAK
Dec. 15 - Jan 2
School Resumes
Jan. 3rd

www.hfa.catholic.tc

SPONSORS / BENEFACTORS

We continue to look for donations and sponsors to support our **Scholarship Program** and help the school with necessary supplies. Any help God will reward you a hundred fold. If you would like and are able to help contact us at holyfamilytci@gmail.com

You can also donate from the US in the following link:

<https://www.rcan.org/mission-turks-and-caicos-islands>

Wish List

This is another way to help the missionary school or students who are in need, by donating any of the following:

- Automatic hand dryers
- Microwave x 3
- Walkie-Talkie Radios
- Electric pencil sharpeners
- Sound / Speaker System
- Ping Pong table.
- Tonner Canon ImageRunner ADVANCE C5255