



Tolle Lege



St. Paul's English Speaking Roman Catholic Parish of Warsaw

In this issue

You are receiving a copy of extraordinary parish bulletin issue. Its Latin title translates to "take up and read". These words were mysteriously heard by St. Augustine upon his conversion in a garden in Milan. These words prompted him to read the letter of St. Paul to the Romans. The words of St. Paul finally convinced young Augustine to convert to Catholicism.

We are presenting to you with an update from Fr. Wiesław from Jerusalem, some basic facts on our Parish, update from RE Program and upcoming events,

Upcoming events

Synod Session II: Dialogue in Church and Society. Date, time & venue: 3rd February at 19:00, online.

Bible Study will be held online on the following dates: February 10th, 24th, March 10th, 24th, April 7th and 21st.

Links to all events can be found on the 4th page of this newsletter, on our Parish [Facebook page](#) and also on our Parish [website](#).



A letter from the Pastor

My beloved in Christ,

It is a new year and this is a new gift from the Lord and we should see it that way. The year should also be seen as a journey, a journey of 365 long days. So as we have already begun this journey, let us take with us, a hiking staff to lean our weight on, the hiking staff of trusting in the Lord at all times as Proverbs 3:5 says "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding", for this journey to be interesting, we all need a partner to go through this long journey with us. Though, there are a long list of persons we might choose to journey with us, let us choose God like Moses asked God to journey with him to see Pharaoh and God replied "My presence will go, do not carry us up from here. For how shall it be known that I have found favor in your sight, I and your people, unless you go with us?" (Exodus 33:14-16).

On this journey of 2022, we need a map to guide us on our way, so let us not forget to get the Map which is the Lord, our spiritual Satellite "I will instruct you and teach you in the way

Our Parish staff & Parish Council

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Music Director: Ewelina
Podrażka (evemusic@wp.pl)

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Farrales
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Our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/saintpaulswarsaw>

you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you” (Psalm 32:8). A journey of 365 days consists of days and nights; the days symbolizing great and awesome times and the nights symbolizes difficult and low moments but, in our days, and our nights, let us “delight in the law of the Lord, and on his law [we] meditate day and night” (Psalm 1:2). God is our backpack on this journey where we keep all the supplies, we will need for the journey St. Paul echoed the point when he said “But my God shall supply all your needs according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19). It is a long journey, we might be injured in the form of falling sick during the year, let us not forget our first aid kit “But I will restore you to health and heal your wounds’, declares the Lord” (Jeremiah 30:17).

So, as we make plans and resolutions for the year, let God be in the front of everything we do this year. I wish you all a great and fulfilling new year, I and Fr. Wiesław will keep praying for you all and we ask you to pray for us too.

Happy New Year and God bless you all.

Fr. A. V. Ovie (OSA)

Update from Fr. Wiesław from Jerusalem

Dear Friends!,

Greetings from Jerusalem! The city of Peace!

Time flies so fast that I have not even noticed three months of months of my sabbatical year are behind me. I hear You wounded what I am doing and how I am doing here. As it was predicted by members of our Parish Council, I am not on holidays although some aspects of my life seem to be like this.

First, I have enrolled in a Biblical School run by Franciscan Friars which is located at the first Station of Via Dolorose. Imagine me passing by the famous Arch of Eccentric Homo everyday, from which Pilate had shown to the crowds Our Lord Jesus after he was mocked and whipped with 39 lashes. The school is. Located in the back of the Church of Flagellation. Once a week I am able to participate in the procession at the Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre. These processions are held every afternoon at 4PM Aga lead to 7 different altars including the Chapel of Crucifixion.

Coronavirus helps us keep to keep these processions in a low contemplative mode. There are very few pilgrims to Israel now. The streets of the Old City, normally crowded and noisy, are almost empty and quiet. Many shops are closed and many tourist business went down or bankrupt due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The most exciting part of studying in Jerusalem is to participate in outdoor lessons about topography of Jerusalem as well as other places. Once a week we used to travel to some destinations which I have never seen before; Lakish, Bet Shemesh, Beit Guvrin, Samaria, Tel Arad and Herodion. The biggest thrill I had was to visit a nearly discovered tells and excavations site of Magdala and just freshly brought into the light the first home of Peter and his brother Andrew. Only professional archeologists were able to attend this last destination!

Other places I was able to visit on my own are Nablus, Ramallah and Hebron. These are hot places and once you go there be ready for a challenge to be surrounded by almost 100% Muslims. A world of its own yet people are friendly.

A big challenge for me was and still is to learn Hebrew! I never studied it before so it was very funny when at the first lesson the teacher came to my desk and turned around my notebook from right to left! Reading from right to left, writing from right to left, the various ways ways of writing were the only things that drove me to an intellectual breakdown in those 3 months!

The studies I undertook are quite demanding. However, I am the most happiest man to have the time to sit over the Bible, be back in the library, studying archeology, history and geography of this land which God chose to become a place of the revelation of his Salvation plan to the World.

In those passed weeks, I also started to run a blog video blog which is published in Polish at www.deon.pl. Some people suggested to me to do the English subtitles but it would be too much for me so you must be satisfied with the Polish version for now.

I pray for you here in many places and I do remember every member of our Parish. I am grateful to Fr. Ovie and the Parish Council that you followed my suggestion and set off on the Sinodal path proposed by Pope Francis. We live in the times when we realize more than ever the need of renewal of the Catholic Church. I hope that upon my return to the Parish in June/July from Jerusalem, we will be able to continue the journey together and bring to the completion what you have started so beautifully.

God bless you all.

Fr. Wiesław Dawidowski, OSA

Your Pastor en voyage.

Upcoming events

Synod Session II: Dialogue in Church and Society. Date, time & venue: 3rd February at 19:00, online. Zoom Meeting link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88480299762?pwd=UIZra1PVjAyeXFauEZxTTNtbG5RUT09>

Bible Study at 19:00, will take place on the following dates:

February 10th, February 24th, March 10th, March 24th, April 7th and April 21st.

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Why Jesus was born in Bethlehem by Fr. Ovie

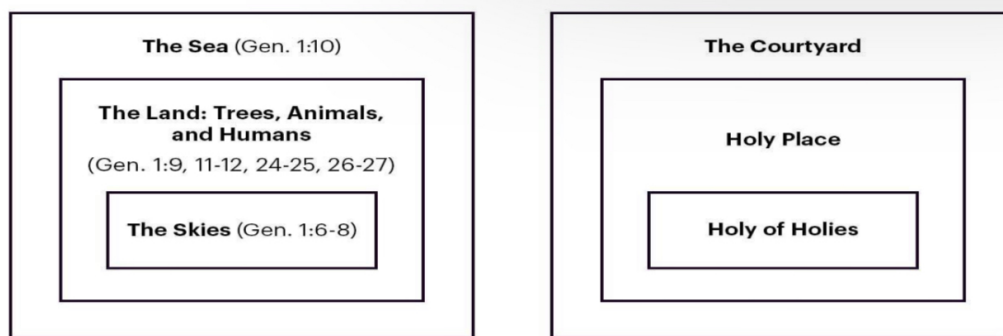
Creation by design in the divine providence, was not meant to be separate from God. Although, the creation of heaven and earth is separate, it was actually designed by God to be connected and the connecting point is Himself. This is also evident in the human nature, just as the creation of heaven in genesis does not only signify the creation of the celestial realm, but also everything that is immaterial which includes the human soul, and the creation of earth does not only mean the creation of the material universe but also the human body and if the human nature is both heaven (soul) and earth (body) it is a demonstration of God's intention and the connection is God. So, when genesis says "In the beginning God created heaven and earth ..." (Genesis 1:1), it also meant anthropologically, that in the beginning, God created the human soul and body. The point where heaven and earth meet is called the temple. That is why St Paul says we are the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 6:19). Therefore, there is the Presence in us.

CREATION AS A TEMPLE

The entirety of creation from the creation narrative, also points to the fact that creation as a whole can be seen as the temple of God, the place of the Presence. By Presence I mean the presence of God. One of the points that suggests this, is the fact that, the creation story took seven days and the seventh day, God rested signaling dedication. In ancient Israel, the temple was dedicated in seven days, and rites of ordination, atonement were all in seven days (Leviticus 8:33-35, Ezekiel 43:25-27, 1 Kings 8:2, 8:65).

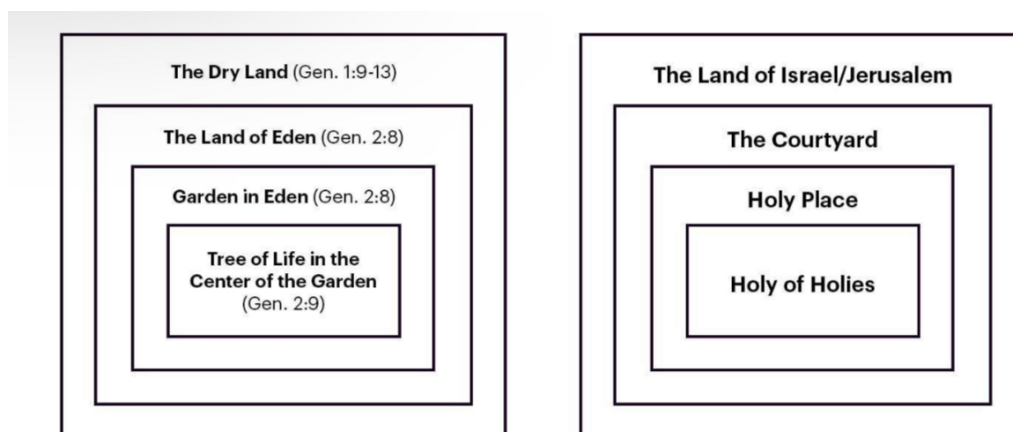
Another reason while creation can be seen as a temple is; in ancient times and in pagan religions, images of their gods are places in pagan temples. In creation something similar occurs also, the image of the divine Being placed in the temple of creation is the human person. In Genesis 1:26, God said "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness". The creation of humans in the image and likeness of God and place in the centre of creation was like the images of deities in pagan temples.

A third reason to see creation as a temple, follows from how the architecture of the temple was modeled after the creation narrative.



THE GARDEN OF EDEN AS A TEMPLE

The concept of Eden as a temple is also significant in our argument for temple being the place of the Presence. Temples are in the ancient times on mountains and likewise the church fathers believed that Eden was on a mountain. Eden was the temple in the centre of the temple of creation. In the first temple, the lampstand, was a representation of the tree of life, and in Eden was the real not a representation of the tree of life (Exodus 25:31-39). In the first temple, there was the holy oil for the anointing of the priests, other holy objects, were kept in the Holy of holies (Exodus 30:22-33, 40:9). The recipe for the preparation of this holy oil was known alone to the high priest and it was a presentation of oil from the tree of life, again the tree was in Eden (Genesis 3:22-24). The Bread of the Presence which was also in the Holy of holies in the first temple represents the presence of God and in Eden was the true presence of God (Genesis 3:8, Exodus 25:30). Again, Ezekiel saw in his vision water flowing from the temple (Ezekiel 43) and in Eden, there was also water flowing from it (Genesis 2:10-14). The highlight is, just as in creation the presence of God is made manifest, in Eden, God's presence was also evident and the first temple shared similarities with Eden and therefore, Eden is a temple, the place of the Presence. The first temple was modeled after the garden of Eden as the true model of a temple before the fall of Adam and Eve.



THE FIRST TEMPLE

The first temple, was like a return to what was lost in the garden of Eden. That which was lost was the Presence. The first temple tried to represent everything that was in the garden of Eden. We will try enumerate how the first temple presents the garden of Eden. Firstly, in the first temple the bread of the Presence as described in Leviticus 24:5-9:

“And you shall take fine flour, and bake twelve cakes of it; two tenths of an ephah shall be in each cake. And you shall set them in two rows, six in a row, upon the table of pure gold. And you shall put pure frankincense with each row, that it may go with the bread as a memorial portion to be offered by fire to the Lord. Every sabbath day Aaron shall set it in order before the Lord continually on behalf of the people of Israel as a covenant for ever. And it shall be for Aaron and his sons, and they shall eat it in a holy place, since it is for him a most holy portion out of the offerings by fire to the Lord, a perpetual due.”

In Exodus 25:30, the bread of the Presence is first addressed. It was to be set on the tabernacle's golden table, as God had directed. Exodus 35:13 lists the bread as part of the tabernacle's donations, while Exodus 39:36 mentions it as part of the completed tabernacle. The Kohathites, who were Levi's sons, were entrusted with the care of the showbread table in Numbers 4. Secondly, the tree of life in the garden of Eden (Genesis 2:9) is symbolised in the first temple is the lampstand (Exodus 25:31-40). The tree of knowledge in the garden (Genesis 2:8) is represented in the first temple in the ark of covenant as the tree of wisdom (Deuteronomy 4:4-6) and the life (Deuteronomy 32:47-47). Thirdly, just as the main entrance to the first temple faced the east (Exodus 15:17), so also the entrance to the garden of Eden is situated in the eastern part of the garden (Genesis 3:24).

THE SECOND TEMPLE

The first temple was destroyed by king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (2 Kings 25:13-17) and for many years the Israelites missed a place for the Presence because there was no temple where they could encounter the Presence brought about by the bread of the Presence in the first Temple. By the time the second temple was built (Ezra 1:1-4, 2 Chronicles 36:22-23), it did not mirror the exact model of the garden of Eden and it lacked certain symbolism and it was worsened by the purge of the second temple of all symbols by king Josiah (2 Chronicles 34). Among the many things that were in the first temple but lacking in the second are: prophets and prophecies — in the time of the first temple, there were hundreds of prophets though we know only of a few because their prophecies were recorded and their prophecies transcended their time, examples are Isaiah, Ezekiel, Jeremiah and more but in the second temple there were no prophets and therefore, there were no prophecies. The first temple had true priest because they were ordained with the holy oil and since the holy oil was missing in the second temple, priests in times the second temple can be argued as not truly ordained. Also, in the first temple the Ark of the Covenant was in the Holy of holies but in the second temple it was missing. The first temple, had flames burning in the Holy of holies symbolising the eternal Presence but in the second temple, there was not eternal flame and therefore, no eternal Presence. The first temple has the Shekhinah (the Presence of God) brought about by the bread of the Presence but this Shekhinah was missing in the second temple. I might not be able to list all that the second temple lacked, but it also lacked the Ruah Hakodesh (the Holy Spirit) which was present in the first temple.

THE PROPHECY OF MICAH AND THE MEANING OF BETHLEHEM

Having seen that the first true temple which was the garden of Eden had been lost due to the sin of Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:22-24), there was need for another temple to be establish to continue the presence of God among His creation in the form of a temple and this need led to the building of the first temple by king Solomon (1 Kings 6) but even this temple was destroyed as a result of the sin of the Israelites by king Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon (2 Kings 25:13-17). So, when the second temple was erected, it did not meet up to the expectations of what a true temple should be as we have

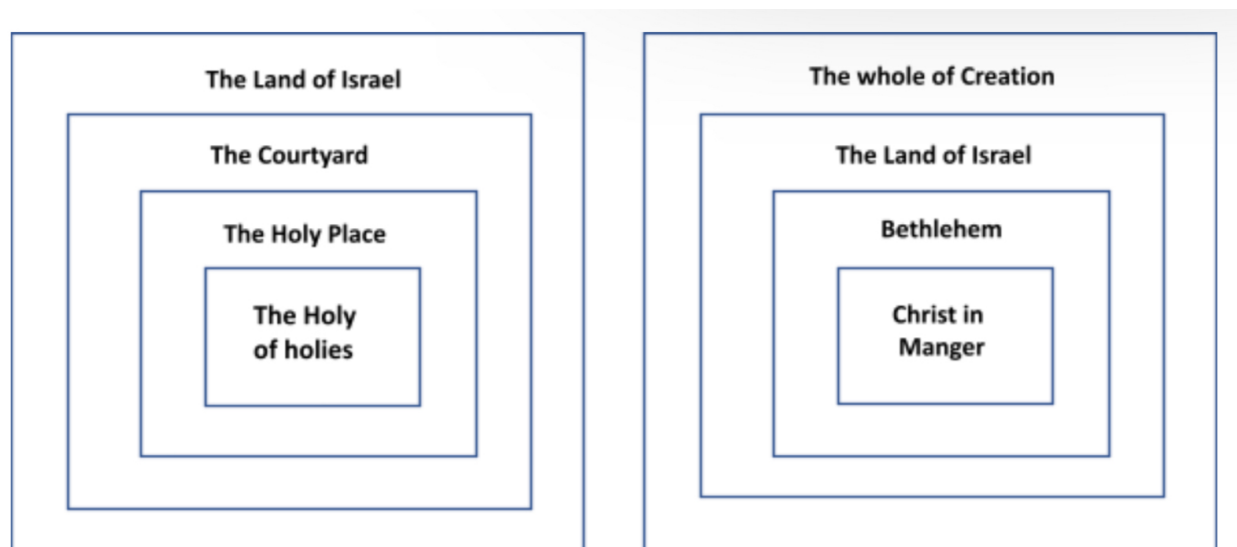
forementioned. There was a strong need for a true temple to be rebuilt, a temple that meets all the requirements of a temple and this is how the prophecy of prophet Micah comes into relevance. In Micah 5:2-5, he says

“But you, O Bethlehem Eph’rathah, who are little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose origin is from of old, from ancient days. Therefore, he shall give them up until the time when she who is in travail has brought forth then the rest of his brethren shall return to the people of Israel. And he shall stand and feed his flock in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. And they shall dwell secure, for now he shall be great to the ends of the earth. And this shall be peace, when the Assyrian comes into our land and treads upon our soil, that we will raise against him seven shepherds and eight princes of men”.

This prophecy of Micah will be fulfilled in the nativity of Christ. It begins with the meaning of the word Bethlehem. Bethlehem means the “house of bread”. What bread could this mean? This bread could mean the bread of the Presence. Jesus referred to Himself as the Bread of Life (John 6:35). Jesus is the Bread of the Presence, the Presence that was in the garden and in the first temple but was lacking in the second temple. By Life, it means He is the tree of Life, therefore, Jesus is the Presence, and the Presence of the tree of Life. So, it is logical, that the house of bread “Bethlehem” becomes the place of the nativity of Christ.

BETHLEHEM AS A TEMPLE AND THE MANGER AS THE HOLY OF HOLIES

Having analyzed creation as a temple, Eden as a temple, the first and second temples, it is now time to answer the question, why Jesus was born in Bethlehem. As aforementioned, Bethlehem which means “house of bread”, and this can be related to the true house of the true Bread— Jesus Christ. Jesus was born in Bethlehem which fulfills the prophecy of Micah and also the name of the place of the birth of Christ. Bethlehem takes the shape of the temple as illustrated in the image below.



Bethlehem — house of bread as the name implies through the nativity of Christ became a temple. In the garden of Eden which is a temple, there was the old Eve and in this new temple; the new Eve— Mary was there. The garden of Eden had eastern connotation because its entrance was from the east

part of the garden, so was the main entrance to the first temple was in the east part of the temple and in Bethlehem, the Magi, began their Journey to Bethlehem from the east. The images of angels were above the Ark of the Covenant in the first temple, so also the angels proclaimed the birth of Christ to the shepherds. The presence of eternal flame, signified by light was in the first temple, so also the bright shining star that led the Magi shone above the place where Jesus was. The Shekhinah (the presence of God) and the Ruach Hakodesh (Holy Spirit) which were present in the first temple but lacking in the second temple, where restored in Bethlehem, the place where Jesus was born. The bread of the Presence which was lacking in the second temple, was personified in the “house of bread” — Bethlehem. The empty Holy of holies in the second temple now contains the true Ark of the Covenant—Jesus Christ. The prophecies which were made in the first temple, lacking in the second temple have now been fulfilled in Bethlehem. In the garden of Eden as a temple, it was the tree of Life, and in Bethlehem, Jesus, Life Himself was born there. In the first temple, the holy oil, the burning of incense and the holy vessels were adorned with gold. In Bethlehem, the Magi brought frankincense for the incense in the temple, myrrh as the holy oil and gold as it was used to adorn holy objects in the temple. The Magi were also priests, true priesthood had been lost in the second temple but in Bethlehem there is a meeting of the true Priest—Jesus Christ restoring the lost priesthood—the magi.

CONCLUSION

I have tried to argue the reason Jesus was born in Bethlehem basically from the meaning of the name Bethlehem and linking it to the theology of the true temple and how it was lost in the second temple and restored in Bethlehem. This is the complexion of Micah's prophecy that through the One who will be born in Bethlehem, there will be restoration which I link to the temple, there shall be feeding which agrees with logic as Bethlehem signifies the house of bread and Christ feeds us with his Body, the Bread of Life (John 6:35). The idea of seven which we earlier connected with temple and worship is again alluded to by Micah “And this shall be peace, when the Assyrian comes into our land and treads upon our soil, that we will raise against him seven shepherds and eight princes of men” (Micah 5:5). It was in Bethlehem, true worship which is not present in the second temple was restored again in Mary's worship of and the Magi's worship of Him “... and going into the house they saw the child with Mary his mother, and they fell down and worshiped him. Then, opening their treasures, they offered him gifts, gold and frankincense and myrrh” (Matthew 2:11).

This argument presented here is not a dogma of the church, and I do not claim that this is the only argument that can be used to support the reason for the birth of Christ in Bethlehem and not in Jerusalem. I can even think of other arguments that can be used to support the reason for the birth of Christ in Bethlehem an example will be Jesus' typology with king David, David was born in Bethlehem but in the article, this line of argument is not my focus, I might do that sometime in the future.

Get to know Fr. Alex.

Fr. Alexander Dung is a priest of the Catholic Archdiocese of Jos, Nigeria. He hails from Jos-Plateau State in central Nigeria. With a strong Catholic parent and formation, Fr. Alex is the second child sandwiched between a brother and a kid sister. On the completion of his Secondary School education

at St. John Vianney minor Seminary in 1992, he continued his response to the vocation of the priesthood. He studied Philosophy at St. Thomas Aquila's Major Seminary (STAMS), Makurdi; and Theology at St. Augustine's Major Seminary (SAMS), Jos, between 1993 and 2002, where he obtained his first Degrees in both fields.

He was ordained a Catholic priest on July 27, 2002. After a few years of pastoral work, in a quest for specialization, with the blessing of his Archbishop, Fr. Dung proceeded to the school of Journalism at Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore (UCSC) in Milan-Italy, from 2009 - 2012. Alongside other pastoral experiences, he has served as Personal Assistant and Secretary to the Archbishop of Jos, Most Rev. Ignatius Kaigama, From 2007 - 2009. He was appointed the Archdiocesan Communications Director and elected the Jos Provincial Director from 2013 - 2018. Since his ordination, he has served in the capacity of parish priest in four parishes and as vicar in one.

Fr. Dung is currently a doctoral student in Liturgy at the famous Uniwersytet Kardynała Stefana Wyszyńskiego (UKSW) in Warsaw Poland 2008 -2022, while offering some pastoral assistance at St.

Paul's English Parish, Warsaw. He loves swimming, plays football, volleyball and table tennis. Research in alternative energy and the means of communication have been a passion in him.



Our Parish Activities

Our Parish is small, with only about 350 attendants at both Masses. Yet in a pretty limited space and time we offer some activities for those who are interested.

Masses - Sundays and feasts of obligation 12:00 noon and 19:30. There is also Mass on First Friday of the Month at 18:30.

Confessions - Before and after any of the Masses and also by appointment.

Religious Education - Sometimes called CCD (Confraternity of Christian Doctrine). The program caters for the children from age 5 to 15 and prepares them to receive the Sacraments as well as to learn the norms of Catholic ethics. The lessons take place on the basis of Sunday school pattern by adult volunteers. During the 2020-21 RE year, due to the pandemic, classes were held online. We continue with online classes this year too.

Youth Group - A post-confirmation for teenagers and students directed by Fr. Ovie. Meetings take place on Sundays after Mass; 13:00.

RCIA - This stands for preparing adults to baptism and sacraments. Lessons take place every Wednesdays at 19:00 by Fr. Ovie. Candidates should be directed by Fr. Ovie Fr. Wiesław.

Choir - Since we have two Masses on Sundays, we also have two choirs. Rehearsals take place at 11:00AM and 19:00. Good singers and musicians of instruments are always welcome. Please contact our Music Director, Mrs. Ewelina Podrażka via e-mail evemusic@wp.pl

Altar Servers - Boys and girls are welcome to become active in assisting our priests at the altar. Please contact the Pastor or Ronaldo Farrales. Our Parish is in a desperate need for the Altar Servers, both boys and girls Altar Servers must not necessarily be little kids but also teenagers. Serving the Mass is not about serving a Priest but about serving the community which gathers at Mass.

Pre-Cana program - Twice a year our Parish provides a pre-marital courses for the English speaking expatriate. It is called Pre-Cana course. The nearest Pre-Cana session will be held in the 3rd or 4th quarter of this year. It may be offered either in a stationary or an online way depending on the pandemic situation. At any rate enrollments are to be done via e-mail: warsawprecana@gmail.com.

Charity - Twice a year, in Lent and Advent we raise funds for different charity projects. Each year, the Parish council decides on the focus of our charity efforts.

Financial Donations through bank transfer

Our Bank account is: 79 1240 5950 1111 0010 5592 3096

For those abroad IBAN: PL 79 1240 5950 1111 0010 5592 3096

Beneficiary Bank Account Name: Dom Zakony Polskiej Prowincji Zakonu św. Augustyna/English Speaking Parish

Beneficiary Bank: Bank Pekao SA.

The title of the transfer: Statutory Purposes/Mass collection in Polish Cele Statutowe.