



December 14, 2025

WHO IS THAT BABY?

To the disappointment of many Chicagoans, Pope Leo's first trip was not back to his hometown, but to a part of the world where Catholics are relatively scarce: Turkey and Lebanon. The centerpiece of his trip at the end of November was an ecumenical gathering in the ancient city of Nicaea, where the Nicaean Creed that we say at Mass was hammered out in 325. Amid much chaos and confusion in Christianity, the creed defined Christian beliefs about God, the Trinity, and the identity of Jesus. In an address at this gathering, Pope Leo pointed out that the Council of Nicaea provides a template for resolving complex issues central to Christianity and creating unity. He saw this ecumenical gathering as a step toward ending the thousand year breech between the Orthodox and the Latin Church.

Resolving differences, though, are often more complex that they appear on the surface. For example, one specific item on the agenda was finding once again a common date for Easter, which the Council of Nicaea had established as the first Sunday following the first full moon after the spring equinox. If that were not complicated enough, the ecclesiastical full moon is not always the same as the astronomical full moon and the Orthodox churches follow the Julian calendar, whereas the western churches follow the Gregorian calendar. Thank goodness Jesus just rose from the dead and did not wait for us to decide when would be the most appropriate time!

While in Turkey, Pope Leo addressed a gathering of Catholic priests, religious, and lay ministers at the Catholic Cathedral in Istanbul. In his talk, Pope Leo raised a concern directly related to the Council of Nicaea and the Nicene Creed, what he called "a new Arianism." There were two major theological positions rejected by the Council of Nicaea. One was called "Docetism," which held that Jesus was truly God but only appeared to be a human being and that his death on the cross was not a real death. The other doctrine, associated with Arias held that while Jesus Christ should be exalted above all other created beings, he was created by God and therefore not equal to God.

"Nicaea affirmed the divinity of Jesus and his equality with the Father. In Jesus, we find the true face of God and his definitive word about humanity and history. This truth constantly challenges our own ideas of God whenever they do not correspond to what Jesus has revealed. It invites us to ongoing discernment regarding our forms of faith, prayer, pastoral life and spirituality. But there is also another challenge, which we might call a 'new Arianism,' present in today's culture and sometimes even among believers. This occurs when Jesus is admired on a merely human level, perhaps even with religious respect, yet not truly regarded as the living and true God among us. His divinity, his lordship over history is overshadowed and he is reduced to a great historical figure, a wise teacher, or a prophet who fought for justice—but nothing more. Nicaea reminds us that Jesus Christ is not a figure of the past; he is the Son of God present among us, guiding history toward the future promised by God."

I believe that Pope Leo has hit upon a significant pastoral issue that is unconsciously shared by a great many baptized Catholics, especially the 75% who do not attend church regularly. Many of us do not directly deny the divinity of Christ or the living presence of Christ in our life and in our world but reduce faith to a set of values taught to us as children. How often have I heard someone say, "I was taught Christian values in Catholic school and I try to live by them" or "I just try to follow the golden rule." The basic idea is that Christ teaches us how to live and once we graduate from school, we graduate from religion. We do not need prayer or church or sacraments or have to learn anything new as adults. We can learn about faith but not learn faith. We can learn about Christ and never come to know Christ. Values are important, but Christ is so much more than a set of values.

All of this seems relevant as we prepare to celebrate Christmas. Who is the baby we are expecting? Is Christmas just a comforting story for children or does it introduce us to Christ who sometimes made people uncomfortable—and still does today? Does Jesus get left in the manger or does Christ walk with us through life? Was Jesus just passing through or is he with us until the end of time?



December 24: 3:00, 5:00, 10:00pm December 25: 8:30, 10:30, 12:15pm.

CHRISTMAS AT ASSUMPTION

There will be music at all Christmas Masses (3:00, 5:00, and 10:00pm on Christmas Eve; 8:30, 10:30, and 12:15pm on Christmas Day). A musical quartet will lead the singing at the 3:00pm Mass on Christmas Eve and will offer a musical program beginning at 2:30pm. The music program for the 10:00pm Mass begins at 9:30pm. Our parish choir and organ will be joined by additional voices and by musicians from the nationally acclaimed Haymarket Opera Company. This is a very special liturgy. There is nothing quite like celebrating Jesus' birth as the shepherds did, in the still watches of the night. A parking attendant will be present in the 311 Building for all Christmas Masses.

EXPERIENCE THE POSADA:

Assumption and Holy Name Cathedral are cosponsoring a Latin



American custom called *Las Posadas*. This reenactment of Mary and Joseph's search for a place to stay in Bethlehem will leave from Holy Name Saturday December 20 at noon. The procession will make several stops along the way until arriving at Assumption, where they will find welcome, food, drink, and music. All are invited.



ART INSTITUTE TOUR Blessed Mary is a favorite subject in many styles of religious art. Join in a one-hour tour of select depictions of her in paintings and sculpture at The Art Institute of

Chicago. The tour at The Art Institute will be led by art historian Karen Barzman on Thursday, December 18th (a free entry day!) at 6:00 pm and, afterwards, we will continue with libations and discussion nearby. Space is limited and will be provided on a first-come, first served basis. Email or call the parish office to register (312-644-0036) or parishoffice@assumption-chgo.org.

HYMNS: #60, #42 (except 5pm Sunday)



NOVEMBER DONATIONS

Sunday Collection -	\$44,569
Sharing Parish -	2,327
Human Development -	1,759
Thanksgiving - Shares	10,754

(includes electronic giving)

RETIRED RELIGIOUS COLLECTION

The Second Collection this weekend is for the Religious Retirement Fund. This fund benefits the Servite Friars, who have staffed Assumption since it began in 1881.

NEW YEAR'S DAY

Wednesday January 1, is the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God and a holyday. This is one of the most ancient titles given to Mary. It affirms that Jesus was truly God as well as truly human from the first moment of his existence. Mass will be celebrated at 5:00pm on Tuesday, December 31 and at 7:30 and 10:30 on January 1.

ADVENT CALENDAR

To help you through the season of Advent, an Advent calendar will be posted on Assumption's homepage, Facebook page, and Instagram, beginning the First Sunday of Advent, November 30. There will be a different reflection and challenge for each day.

WEDDINGS:

JEFFREY TAYLOR & ISABEL ODOM

PRAY FOR THEM: Annette Russo, Davy Hart, Frank Cardenas, Erin Gentile, Kathy Escher, Patrick McRae, Carolina Gomez, Willie & Mary Priego, Mary Ann Kevin, Edward Foster, and Vinny Perri

REST IN PEACE: Gordon Nary

MASS INTENTIONS ~ WEEK OF DECEMBER 13, 2025

Sat	13th	5:00 † Michael & Rose Marie Sopko, Helen Morris, Deceased of Sopko,
		Morris, Pfiester & Jenkins Families
Sun	14th	7:30 † Leo & Helen Dillon
		9:00 † Maria de Perozo
		10:30 † Charles & Marion Joachim
		12:15 Assumption Parishioners
Mon	15th	7:00 Dubuque Family
		12:10 Rose Clara McGillicuddy
Tues	16th	7:00 Keith Armato (b'day)
		12:10 † Edward Brennan
Thurs	18th	7:00 Teddy Dubuque (b'day)
		12:10 † Leo & Lillian Pusateri
Fri	19th	7:00 Dorothy Brown (b'day)
		12:10 Dubuque Family
Sat	20th	7:30 † S. Clifford Brown

VISA



NO 12:10 MASS ON DECEMBER 24

Mass for Christmas Eve will be offered at 7:00am only. Masses for Christmas begin Christmas Eve afternoon.



HELPING ASSUMPTION WITH YOUR IRA

If you have an individual retirement account and have reached the age of 70 ½, you can direct your IRA custodian to transfer up to \$108,000 per year to qualified charities, including Assumption. This transfer will count towards your minimum required IRA distribution, and you do not have to pay an income tax on the amount transferred directly form the IRA to the charity.

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS:

In light of expanded Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) operations in Chicago, it is important to know that, regardless of one's immigration status, all people are entitled to certain rights by the Constitution. If approached by an ICE agent, you have the right to remain silent and you do not have to sign any papers. If you are not being arrested or detained, you may walk away. ICE agents cannot search you or your home without your consent or a search warrant signed by a judge. You have the right to speak to an attorney and to have your lawyer with you at any hearing before an immigration judge.



We can make a difference if we each take one small step every day to help save God's gift of creation. Let's embrace Laudato SÍ.



Help care for aging Friars who served at Assumption. Remember The Order of Friar Servants of Mary, **USA Province** in your will.



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If you are kind, people may accuse you of ulterior motives. Be kind anyway. Mother Teresa



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