



# SSPX



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## The Invisible Made Visible

Here at the start of 2022, with a global pandemic still causing massive disruptions in the lives of so many across the world, it is more important than ever to continue looking to Our Lord Jesus Christ for mercy and guidance. The Christmas season which has recently drawn to a close has been particularly difficult for many who have found themselves separated from family, friends, and in some instances their own churches.

As a small consolation for those who may have been deprived of a “normal” Nativity for the past two years, this issue of the *Regina Coeli Report* offers a small display of crèches or Nativity scenes from chapels of the U.S. District of the Society of Saint Pius X. May they serve as a reminder of the beautiful gift God gave

to the world by becoming Incarnate, and being born into the world as a little child, the world He created, in a cave over 2,000 years ago. And may they also help all in renewing their faith in Our Lord, to see us out of this present crisis, while preparing souls for the penitential season of Lent.

Even in the darkest times, whether real or imagined, despair is never the answer. Christ’s message of hope and redemption is as true today as it was millennia ago. Although we may be tempted to believe we are living in the darkest of times, the light of Christ never ceases to penetrate that darkness and show the way forward to the Kingdom of Heaven.

# Letter from the District Superior



Dear Friends,

In this issue of the *Regina Coeli Report* we offer a display of Nativity scenes from across the U.S. District of the Society of Saint Pius X. In addition, there is a personal account of the Holy Land from one of the SSPX's priests that I believe you will find both informative and edifying.

As the main article in this issue reinforces, the miraculous Nativity of Our Lord is not an isolated event to be celebrated and forgotten, but a beautiful testament of God's love for the world which should never be far from our reflections. "Behold a virgin shall be with child, and bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us" (Mt. 1:23).

All of us have experienced great challenges over the past two years. Even those who have avoided medical afflictions still have faced economic, social, and personal challenges brought on by COVID-19 and the attendant restrictions that have been imposed on everyone.

Above all of this, the crisis in the Catholic Church continues. For reasons that are becoming clearer by the day, the Holy See has placed new onerous restrictions on the traditional Latin Mass, that ancient Roman Rite. Bishops who have long resisted the freedoms given to this immemorial liturgy by Pope-emeritus Benedict XVI were also seen to lock down their churches, or to restrict their access and the activities within them. These and other events have cast a long shadow over Catholic life in 2022.

Certainly, the SSPX will not give up the fight for Catholic Tradition. Please keep our apostolate in your prayers during this difficult period. Rest assured, we will all continue to pray for you.



Fr. John Fullerton



# Perceiving Divine Realities

Tradition holds that after his pilgrimage to the Holy Land, St. Francis of Assisi created the first crèche or Nativity scene in 1223. Though its precise arrangement has varied over the centuries, at the center of these scenes is always the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Joseph, and Our Lord Jesus Christ in the manger or crib. It has since become commonplace to add additional elements including various animals, shepherds, and angels. This display regularly adorns the interior and exterior of Catholic churches throughout the world, with different cultures placing their own touches on the ornamentation. In the end, the purpose of these scenes is to instill a sense of awe, faith and gratitude for the birth of Our Lord.

Children from Assumption Chapel in St. Marys, KS are fascinated by the beautiful depiction of Our Lord's humble birth.



How we should approach these displays has always been a matter of some discussion. There is, on the one hand, to overly literalize these displays as near-perfect representations of Christ's birth. Such thoughts, though pious by intention, miss the point. These displays should bring our focus not on the physical objects before us, but the divine reality they point to. Some displays may be more aesthetically pleasing or in tune with our personal tastes than oth-



St. Vincent de Paul Church in Kansas City, MO with the Nativity scene adorned with lights at Midnight Mass.

ers, but that should not obscure the higher meaning they can and should hold in our hearts. Only those present at the Nativity truly knew its precise arrangement, including the structure of the cave where Our Lady gave birth. Still, we can use Nativity displays as a basis for meditating on the humble surroundings of the Word Incarnate, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, and the Savior of the world.

On the other hand, it is also important to be on guard to dismiss these displays as “pious frauds” or local customs that are divorced from reality. In the contemporary age, where critical-historical analysis of ancient texts from Homer to St. Paul’s epistles attempts to “expose” the “truth” behind classical accounts, some fall into the trap that if a particular depiction or arrangement is not “absolutely” confirmed by the text, then it must be false. This temptation lurks behind a great deal of Protestant Christian approaches to the Bible where any tradition outside of the concrete text is not just eyed with suspicion, but derision. Even the location of Our Lord’s birth, which has been well known and settled upon by the Church since its earliest centuries, is held in little regard

because none of the Gospels specifically identify its location. The end result of this approach is a pointless descent into empty rationalism, the sort which leads to calling all of the core tenets of the Faith into question.

While we are technically outside of the Christmas season with our eyes looking toward Lent, thinking back on the birth of Christ and its depiction can help prepare us for what is to come. Just as we adore scenes of Our Lord during the Nativity, so too do we fall down before the Cross of Christ during Lent, seeking His infinite mercy for our many sins. In the Stations of the Cross we see a detailed depiction of Our Lord’s

Passion. And while this depiction may not be “literally true” or exclusively “Biblical,” the Stations devotion is intended to bring us in union with Christ’s suffering and instill both a sense of sorrow and gratitude, for if Jesus had not endured such horrors, we would have no promise of eternal life.

Other important depictions will be present in churches across the world during the Lenten season. Regardless of Catholic rite or locale, images and statues of Our Lord’s crucifixion abound. So, too, do recreations of His agony in the garden, His abandonment by the Apostles, and eventually the



Nativity at St. Joseph’s Church in Ray Township, MI.



triumphant moment of His Resurrection. And again, none of these displays are meant to be taken in an overly literal sense; they are meant to draw our minds closer to a Heavenly reality that heightens our piety.

And so with the Christmas season just behind us, now is the time to remember the Nativity and use it as a basis to prepare for Lent. We have celebrated God's coming into the world; now we look toward the fulfillment of why He came. Christ is born, and in a short time we will come together to honor His conception on the Feast of the Annunciation. The liturgi-

cal year is a cycle, one that calls back to its constituent parts. It would be a mistake to isolate these parts, disconnecting them from the larger reality that has been given to us through revelation.

Indeed, this is why some congregations, like the Redemptorist order founded by St. Alphonsus, honor "little Christmas" on the 25th day of every month. The Nativity is not a "moment" to be depicted momentarily then abandoned. It is a singularly most important event in human history, one that should always be on our minds and in our hearts.



Christmas Midnight Mass in Los Gatos, CA was unusual this year. Local health regulations prevented them from having Mass in the chapel in San Jose and so they set up an altar in the old barn on the property in Los Gatos to make an outdoor chapel. Around 450 faithful came to the manger with their children to shiver in the cold with the shepherds and Holy Family.

The near-life-sized figures at the outdoor Nativity scene in Los Gatos, CA.





The altar at Assumption Chapel is decked out beautifully to celebrate the Feast of the Nativity.



Nativity scene from St. Vincent de Paul Church in Kansas City, MO.



Our Lady of Fatima chapel near Portland, OR recently moved a little north to Vancouver, WA and celebrated their first Christmas in their new building this past year. There will be renovations in the near future, but even the existing space was made beautiful to celebrate Our Lord's birth. The midnight Mass was completely candlelit.



The choir from Our Lady of Fatima chapel near Portland, OR sang to sick and elderly parishioners on December 27 before gathering for a Christmas party at a nearby home.



Parishioners from St. Joseph's Church in Ray Township, MI make up for the rather plain interior of the chapel with a vibrant display to celebrate Our Lord's birth.



The schola sings for the Christmas High Mass at Assumption Chapel in St. Marys, KS.



Midnight candlelit Mass on Christmas at St. Vincent de Paul Church in Kansas City, MO.

Christmas decorations at Immaculate Conception Church in Post Falls, ID.



Creche at Immaculate Conception Church in Post Falls.







# The Spiritual Significance of the Holy Land

Interview with Fr. Jonathan Loop

## How many times have you had the privilege of traveling to the Holy Land?

Providence has allowed me to travel to the Holy Land on two separate occasions. The first, in the fall of 2015, was with a family that I had known for some time. The second, in the spring of 2018, was as the chaplain of one of the Regina Pilgrimages put on by Mr. de la Serna.

## When you visited the actual location of the Annunciation or of Our Lord’s birth, were they what you expected?

In reality, I wasn’t sure what to expect. Some of the church architecture at these holy sites is a bit modern, and perhaps a bit jarring in a few ways. At the same time, in the Church of the Annunciation, for example, there is a little cave on the lower level which has been identified as a likely spot where Our Lady would have received St. Gabriel. It is astonishing in a way to be so closely connected—after a fashion—to these profound mysteries of our redemption. In both this church and the one dedicated to Our Lady’s visitation of St. Elizabeth, an effort is made to show that these simple interactions 2,000 years ago have effected all humanity; for example, the *Magnificat* is presented in over a 100 languages at the site of the Visitation in Ein-Karim. Truly, “all generations [and peoples] have called Mary blessed.”

## How did visiting the locations where our Lord walked impact your faith/spiritual life?

This is a difficult question to answer, though I suppose one could say that it helps give a greater grounding to one’s spiritual life. It is possible to leave in an imagined world where one imposes one’s own ideas and prejudices on Our Lord and His actions while He walked this earth. Being in the Holy Land, seeing the places that He sanctified by His presence and His trials helps to establish the reality of our religion. We can identify many of the places He lived, preached, and suffered, just as they are presented in the Gospels. This, in turn, helps to nourish our life of prayer and meditation.

## Why should a Catholic take the opportunity to visit the Holy Land?

There are several reasons a Catholic would do well to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

In the first place, this puts him in contact with the physical locations sanctified by the presence of Our Lord Jesus Christ. Our religion is one of “incarnation”: the second Person of the Holy Trinity



Fr. Jonathan Loop

took to Himself our human nature and truly walked the hills and valleys surrounding Jerusalem, the Sea of Galilee, the Jordan river, *etc.* We can in this way be grounded in the historicity and reality of our Faith. The events of the gospel truly happened, and are not mere pious words written in the dim and misty

past on pages which have long since ceased to be living or relevant to modern life.

In the second place, traveling to the Holy Land gives a sense of the greater universality (catholicity) of the Church. An interesting feature of the Holy Land is that it does not draw that many Protestants from the US. However, you will encounter Catholics from all corners of the globe, with their different cultures and customs on display. It can be uncomfortable, but it helps us to cease to be so provincial. You also have the opportunity to experience different rites of the Church, even if some are currently in the possession of schismatics. This allows us to understand that the Church is a much greater thing than our very limited experience in the United States.

Thirdly, visiting the Holy Land allows one to be aware of the wider world of men, especially since both Jews and Muslims call this city sacred for their own reasons. One can regularly hear the Muslim “call to prayer” and one sees many orthodox Jews. These are people who are deadly serious

about their religions, and who nevertheless do not wish to acknowledge Our Lord Jesus Christ as He truly is. One can admire the intensity of their misguided and ultimately false beliefs, and thus be pushed to be more loyal to Our Lord, who is the “way, the truth, and the life.”

**What sites were the most unforgettable?**

This is another hard question to answer. During my first trip, I was able to spend a night at the Franciscan monastery atop Mt. Tabor, and then to say Mass in the Church dedicated to this mystery. The silence and stillness of this mountain truly helped me appreciate the miracle Our Lord performed here, and the effect it must have had on the apostles. At the same time, during that visit, we could not help but hear the call to prayer of several of the local muezzin echo across the valley below, signifying the darkness from which Our Lord came to save us.

Jerusalem. It is the Holy City *par excellence*, even if it has proven itself unfaithful so many times before, and remains so today. It contains so

many powerful testimonies to Our Lord’s life and mission, that it is hard to choose which of them are the most beautiful. The Church of the Agony has a silent but pained beauty, and is surrounded by an olive grove that may well have been present when Our Lord sweated blood on our behalf. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre has a mysterious and glorious quality, as it contains both Calvary and the tomb of Our Lord. I was able to say Mass on the Latin altar during my first trip to the Holy Land. And yet, it shows the frailty of men insofar as there are at least four schismatic “churches” which share the premises with the Latin Rite Catholics. The Church of Our Lady’s Dormition, the Cenacle, the Mount of Olives, I could go on. *Jerusalem, O Jerusalem, convertere ad Dominum Deum tuum.*

The Sea of Galilee. Our Lord spent a great deal of his public life here. One can still sense the great serenity of His presence, even in the remains of Capharnaum (where St. Peter’s home has been located), Caesarea, and the Mount where it seems likely He gave His famous sermon.



The sea of Galilee at sunset.

One of the most significant places in the Holy Land, Mount Tabor is recognized as the place that Christ was transfigured in the presence of Peter, James, and John. The Church you see today, the Church of the Transfiguration, is fairly recent and was built by the Franciscans in 1924. In size, it is one of the largest in the Holy Land.



Groves of ancient olive trees surround the Church of the Agony.



The Church of the Agony in Jerusalem was completed in 1924 using funds of many different countries and lies at the foot of the Mount of Olives. The religious significance of this beautiful church is that it is built near the Garden of Gethsemane, where Our Lord was arrested. It also enshrines a section of bedrock on which Jesus himself allegedly prayed.



The interior of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.

The site of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem is identified as the place both of the crucifixion and the tomb of Our Lord. The church has long been a major pilgrimage center for Catholics from around the world.

## US Pilgrimages

### Pascua Florida Pilgrimage

April 19-24, 2022

Come walk the path of the martyrs from St. Thomas More Church in Sanford, Florida, to St. Augustine, the oldest known site of the First Mass in North America. Or sponsor the many priests and seminarians joining the pilgrimage, who will then journey for you and present your intentions to Our Lady of La Leche.

For more information please visit [sspxflorida.com](http://sspxflorida.com) or contact [stma.office@gmail.com](mailto:stma.office@gmail.com) / (407) 212-3032.

## Confirmation Schedule 2022

Chapel	Date	Bishop
El Paso, TX	March 12	Bp. Fellay
Albuquerque, NM	March 13	Bp. Fellay
Sanger, TX	March 19	Bp. Fellay
Fort Worth, TX	March 20	Bp. Fellay
San Antonio, TX	March 26	Bp. Fellay
Dickinson, TX	March 27	Bp. Fellay
Denver, CO	April 2	Bp. Fellay
Mandan, ND	April 3	Bp. Fellay
Ridgefield, CT	April 23	Bp. de Mallerais
Nicholville, NY	April 24	Bp. de Mallerais
Walton, KY	May 1	Bp. de Mallerais
Cleveland, OH	May 8	Bp. Fellay
St. Marys, KS	May 14	Bp. Fellay
Post Falls, ID	May 22	Bp. Fellay
San Jose, CA	May 29	Bp. Fellay

## Mass Stipends

To request a Mass intention, please note the current requested stipends:

- For one Mass: \$20
- For a novena of Masses (9 consecutive Masses): \$200
- For Gregorian Masses (30 consecutive Masses): \$800

## Upcoming Retreats

### Men:

Feb 23-26	Virtues	Phoenix, AZ
Mar 14-19	Ignatian	Ridgefield, CT
Mar 28-April 2	Ignatian	Phoenix, AZ
April 25-30	Ignatian	Los Gatos, CA
May 16-21	Ignatian	Ridgefield, CT
Aug 29-Sept 3	Ignatian	Ridgefield, CT
Aug 29-Sept 3	Ignatian	Los Gatos, CA
Sept 12-17	Ignatian	Phoenix, AZ
Oct 10-15	Ignatian	Los Gatos, CA
Nov 7-12	Ignatian (Spanish)	Phoenix, AZ
Nov 14-19	Ignatian	Ridgefield, CT
Dec 5-10	Ignatian	Phoenix, AZ
Dec 14-17	3-day Ignatian	Los Gatos, CA

### Women:

Feb 9-12	Virtues	Phoenix, AZ
Feb 14-19	Ignatian	Ridgefield, CT
Mar 7-12	Ignatian	Los Gatos, CA
April 4-9	Ignatian	Ridgefield, CT
May 9-14	Ignatian	Phoenix, AZ
May 9-14	Ignatian	Los Gatos, CA
July 11-16	Ignatian	Ridgefield, CT
July 18-23	Vocations	Phoenix, AZ
Aug 8-13	Ignatian	Ridgefield, CT
Sept 19-24	Ignatian	Los Gatos, CA
Oct 10-15	Ignatian	Phoenix, AZ
Oct 10-15	Ignatian	Ridgefield, CT
Nov 14-19	Ignatian (Spanish)	Phoenix, AZ
Nov 30-Dec 3	3-day Ignatian	Los Gatos, CA

### Mixed:

March 9-12	Matrimony	Phoenix, AZ
Oct 26-29	Matrimony	Phoenix, AZ

Dates subject to change. For more information please contact: 816-733-2500 | [www.sspix.org](http://www.sspix.org)

## Eucharistic Crusade

### Monthly Intentions



**January:** For many holy priests

*God, who willest not the death of the sinner, but rather that he be converted and live; grant, by the intercession of blessed Mary ever Virgin and of all the saints, laborers for Thy Church, fellow laborers with Christ, to spend and consume themselves for souls. Through the same Jesus Christ, etc. Amen.*

**February:** For our parents and families

*God of bounty and of mercy, to Thy almighty protection we commend our home, our family and all we possess. Bless us all, as Thou didst bless the Holy Family at Nazareth. Preserve our bodies, purify our souls, guide our hearts and lead us to eternal life. Amen.*

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## Regina Coeli Report