



December 17, 2006 – Third Sunday of Advent

"I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is coming." Luke 3:16

† Servant Leader †

God's Time is Near – A Message for Christmas

December 2006

Dear Friends in Christ,

At Christmas each year, the scene in Bethlehem - stable and manger, shepherds and friendly beasts, angels and wisemen - takes center place in the Church. The townspeople of today rush to be there just like the shepherds on the night of our Savior's birth.

As you look at the Holy Family, you think of your own family - perhaps where you heard the Christmas story for the first time. Each year you relive Christ's birth with great joy, together with His whole Church. As Pope John Paul II once wrote, "What joy could be greater than the joy brought by love? What joy could be greater than the joy which Jesus brings at Christmas to people's hearts?"

This is the Blessed Season in which we express our thanks for past kindnesses and love by exchanging gifts in token of our friendship and devotion. While many people seem to have "lost track" of the true meaning of Christmas, we believe that Catholics, more and more, are trying to "Keep Christ in Christmas." We realize that we each have the rare privilege of receiving the same "Perfect" Christmas Gift – Christ, Himself, on His Birthday. And whether we live in the same city or not, our family and relatives can all be united with Christ and each other at Christmas Mass.

Christmas allows us to extend our deep and heartfelt appreciation for your loyal and generous cooperation during the past year. We wish to contribute to your spiritual joy by offering you our gift...Spiritual Opportunity... for a Happier and Holier Christmas, in the special Christmas services we make available, at what we hope are convenient times, during this Holy Season. We will also remember each and every one of you in a very special way in all of the Christmas Masses and will ask the Infant Savior to shower the choicest of His Blessings upon you and yours.

And while you are thinking of gifts for your family and friends, remember that, had it not been for the Birth of Christ, there would be no Christmas ... no Church... Isn't it fitting, then, that His Church be placed on the top of your list? By offering Him our sacrificial gift as a token of our appreciation, it will be pleasing to God and gain the spiritual benefits that are lost when we give because it's an obligation.

May you keep the image of the Holy Family in your heart on Christmas and let them guide you throughout the coming year. Blessings and joy to you and yours.

As the servants of Christ and His people, it is a privilege to serve the people of Holy Family,

Rev. Michael F. Kiernan

Rev. Jeronimo Marcelo

Fr. John P. Sullivan

PRAYER CORNER

Please remember in your prayers:

Barbie Adorno, Peter Alvarez, Marcel Arnal, Mary Avila, Jack Barca, Pam Bardwil, Cody Bartley, Teresa Bennett Smith, Charles Black, Jill Boyd, John Boyle, Shirley Bryant, Bernard Burke, John Bustabade, Marge Caron, Bob Cleveland, Darren Crose, James Crutcher, Julie Desrochers, Maria Dixon, John Dooney, Jim Espinoza, Lois Espinoza, Andrew Flores, Walt Fogleman, Loretta Francescon, Genny Giles, Frances & Leo Girard, Bob Gokey, Evelyn Gonsalves, Robert Gonzaga, Manuel Guerra, Max Guerra, Charlene Gutierrez, Rick Gutierrez, Kathleen Hansen, Eric Hayes, Jason Hayes, Stanley Hayes, Allison Herring, Glean & Kathryn Hollier, Randy Kennedy, Kimberly Kolodzie, Jonnie Kuennen, Ian Larmore, Karen Lewis, Maria Mamauog, Maria Martinez, Earl Mattingly, Luke McCord, June McMaught, Jenine Michilena, Paul Moran Jr., Paul Moran Sr., Mary Nekrassoff, Eleanor Obmann, Betty O'Neil, Lee Ann Parrott, Nita Parrott, Bud Phelps, Tom Poeschl, Sr. Mary Porter, Christine Regan, Raymond Remick, Zan Rockett, Nikelle Schafer, Charles Schneider, Katherine Schottgen, Theresa Silva, Diane & Mike Smith, Marylyn Smith, Lisa Stamps, Kyle Steele, Phyllis Steele, Jo Ster, Laura & Paul Studer, Simon Sucharski, Clement Sweeney, D. Sweeney, Maureena Sutton, Elise Taylor, I. Thompson, X. Thompson, Jean Villanueva, Frank Vogel, Emily Walsh, Marvin Webster, Bishop Weigand, Mike Williams, Ken Zebroski, Claudette Zompetta

Stewardship

~ a way of life ~

RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS SECOND COLLECTION TODAY

The rising numbers of elderly religious and the rising costs of health care make the need greater than ever. Our elderly and infirm religious offer inspiring examples of aging with grace, dignity, and faith. They also provide genuine enrichment and encouragement to others in the larger society who are aging.

Religious Retirement Appeal Donors often speak of this campaign as a way to give back to Religious who ministered so generously throughout their lives. Please do your best to support the collection for Religious by responding generously. God bless you.

ADVENT — MAKING A DIFFERENCE

With the great joy of Christmas just around the corner, sometimes we forget that, like Lent, Advent is a time of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. As we prepare for Christmas, it is the third of these tenets, almsgiving, which needs a great deal of attention. It should be natural to think of Advent, preparing for the birth of a poor child in a poor setting in Bethlehem, as a time of helping the poor among us.

Think of our namesakes, the Holy Family, and their understanding of the hardships of the poor. It's easy to imagine the Blessed Mother wishing that we would prepare for Christmas by thinking of and helping the needy, the cold and hungry. Mary and Joseph experienced poverty and homelessness in Bethlehem, and while the Baby Jesus was not humanly conscious of their plight as a newborn infant, He later referred to himself as homeless when He said, "Foxes have dens and birds of the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to rest his head." (Luke 9:58)

Our parish family must join the church throughout the world in praying that people will be awakened to the reality of the poor and broken and get back to the true meaning of Christmas. Before wise men appeared with gifts fit for a King, shepherds arrived offering all that they had—simple food, humble clothing, awe and compassion for a newborn child.

Always remember what Jesus asked of us, "I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me." (Matthew 25:35) This Advent and Christmas, make it part of your celebration of Christ's coming to give of your time and resources to help those in need. Read the bulletin each week to find opportunities right here in our community to make a difference.

ARE YOU CALLED TO BE A VINCENTIAN?

Holy Family Conference of St Vincent de Paul invites you to join us in silent works of charity by quietly and discretely aiding needy families. The purpose of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul is to fulfill the two great commandments - love of God and love of neighbor. We seek out God's needy, both materially and spiritually, and help where we can. We believe that by coming closer to the needy we are coming closer to God.

Vincentians are not professionally trained social workers. The important thing is the desire to serve as Jesus served. All of us have a great deal of expertise in various areas; by working together, we can move mountains. Many Vincentians have raised families, run a household, built buildings, repaired autos or done just what you do so very well. The needy have need of your talents, your concern, and your love. If you would like more information about joining us in our service to those in need, call 722-0264 and leave us your name and phone number.

STEWARDSHIP – TREASURE	
GENERAL COLLECTION	
Weekly Goal	\$ 11,000.00
Nov 19	\$ 10,083.00
Nov 26	\$ 8,936.00
Dec 3	\$ 12,905.00
Dec 10	\$ 9,631.00
YEAR-TO-DATE	\$ 242,259.00
Goal-to-Date (24 Weeks)	\$ 264,000.00
% of Goal Collected	91.76 %
Annual Goal	\$ 572,000.00
CAPITAL CAMPAIGN COLLECTION	
Weekly Goal	\$ 3,750.00
Nov 19	\$ 2,320.00
Nov 26	\$ 645.00
Dec 3	\$ 1,817.50
Dec 10	\$ 3,311.50
YEAR-TO-DATE	\$ 39,672.50
Goal-to-Date (24 Weeks)	\$ 90,000.00
% of Goal Collected	44.08 %
Annual Goal	\$ 195,000.00
SPECIAL COLLECTIONS	
Immaculate Conception	\$ 2,231.50
<i>Today's Gospel provides a blueprint for good stewardship: "Let the man who has two coats give to him who has none. The man who has food should do the same."</i>	

ADVENT RECONCILIATION SERVICE

This Tuesday, December 19th, 7:00 pm in the Church
Communal Penance Service & Individual Confessions
Join your parish family for this spirit-filled event!

MASS INTENTIONS

Mon: Francis Eichler +; Wally Yager +
Tue: Alejandro Alquiza +
Wed: Joseph Bustabade +
Thu: Bruno Geronimo +; Quirino Baraodin +
Fri: Bruno Geronimo +
Sat: 8:30 am Mass Joa Lewis +
Fenecia Campagna +
Francescon Family +
Sun: 12:30 pm Mass Pro Populo



READINGS FOR THE WEEK

Mon: Jer 23:5-8; Mt 1:18-25
Tue: Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a; Lk 1:5-25
Wed: Is 7:10-14; Lk 1:26-38
Thu: Sgs 2:8-14; Lk 1:39-45
Fri: 1 Sm 1:24-28; Lk 1:46-56
Sat: Mal 3:1-4, 23-24; Lk 1:57-66
Sun: Fourth Sunday of Advent
Mi 5:1-4a; Heb 10:5-10; Lk 1:39-45



Questions of the Week:

For Adults: How can you live the promise of your Baptism each day?
For Teens: What do you remember from stories about your Baptism? What does your Baptism mean to you now?
For Children: Talk about the importance of keeping promises.



Holy Family School

HOLY FAMILY SCHOOL students will begin their Christmas Vacation at noon on Thursday, December 21, following the Christmas prayer Service at 11 a.m. The Class of 2007 will recreate the Nativity Story as recounted in the story The Star. Many of the students will reprise the roles they played in the preschool production in 1995, and their parents will join the faculty and staff in wondering where the time has gone! The entire school community wishes a Blessed Christmas and New Year to the parishioners and all those whom they love.

YOUTH MINISTRY

TEENS PREPARE THE WAY

As we continue the season of advent, why not go to www.goodgroundpress.com and select the teen advent calendar icon. You will find a practical guide for the days leading up to Christmas that will guide along your advent journey. During this season of waiting and preparation dedicate some time each day to really reflect upon the true meaning of Christmas.

LOOKING FOR A MEANINGFUL CHRISTMAS GIFT?

Why not support our teens by purchasing one of the Commemorative History of the Diocese of Sacramento books that the youth are selling now. Watch for tables after masses in the weeks ahead or call the youth office if you'd like one put aside. The books are beautifully illustrated and filled with many interesting facts about the Catholic heritage in this diocese. Books are \$30 with all proceeds benefiting our youth ministry program.

Holy Family Christmas Schedule 2006

Communal Penance Service –

Tuesday, December 19th – 7:00 p.m.

Reconciliation/Confession –

Wednesday, December 20th – 12:00-1:00 p.m.

Thursday, December 21st – 10:00-11:00 a.m.

Friday, December 22nd – 6:00-7:00 p.m.

Saturday, December 23rd – 3:00-4:00 p.m.

Communal Anointing of the Sick –

Thursday, December 21st – 10:30 a.m.

4th Sunday of Advent:

Saturday & Sunday, Dec. 23-24

Saturday: 4:30 p.m. Vigil

Sunday: 7:30 a.m., 9:00 a.m., 12:30 p.m.,
and 10:30 a.m. in Spanish

CHRISTMAS MASSES

Christmas Eve, Sunday, December 24th
6:00 p.m. Vigil Mass and 12 Midnight Mass

Christmas Day, Monday, December 25th
7:30 a.m., 9:00 a.m., 12:30 p.m. in English and
10:30 a.m. in Spanish (No 6:00 p.m. Mass)

Holy Family: Saturday & Sunday, December 30-31
Saturday: 4:30 p.m. Vigil
Sunday: 7:30 & 9:00 a.m., 12:30 & 6:00 p.m.
10:30 a.m. in Spanish

New Year's Day: Monday, January 1st, 9:00 a.m.

Epiphany: Saturday & Sunday, January 6-7
Saturday: 4:30 p.m. Vigil
Sunday: 7:30 & 9:00 a.m., 12:30 & 6:00 p.m.
10:30 a.m. in Spanish

Baptism of the Lord: Monday, January 8th - 8:30 a.m.

‘Tis The Season -
Open House In The Parish Rectory

The Pastoral Council and the Welcoming Committee will be hosting an Open House in the parish rectory TODAY, Sunday, December 17th, from 1 - 4 p.m. Come and celebrate Christmas with Fr. Kiernan, Fr. Ron, Fr. John, Deacon Mark and your whole parish family.

Each family is asked to bring an appetizer or a dessert to share. See you there!



Joyful Noize

**CHRISTMAS CONCERT IN THE CHURCH
 TONIGHT - SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17TH:**

Following the 6:00 pm mass, Joyful Noize (the 6:00 Choir) presents an evening of spirit-filled songs of the season sure to fill your heart with holiday cheer!

All are invited to bring a coat, blanket, pack of socks, gloves, hat or other article of warm clothing for the CYM Blanket Drive as the "price of admission."

POINSETTIAS FOR CHRISTMAS

Holy Family is asking for donations of poinsettias to adorn the church this Christmas. We will need the flowers donated by Friday December 22nd. We will be decorating the Church for Christmas on Saturday December 23rd, if you wish you may bring your flower that morning, or leave at the entrance by the chapel a couple days ahead. We ask that you please do not take the flower to the parish office. If you are interested in joining the decorating team, please call Bonnie Johnson for more info 408-5191. Thank you for your continued support and generosity. May your Holidays be blessed by the Light of Christmas.

MEN'S WEEKEND RETREAT:

This is the First Call for the men of the parish to our annual retreat at Christ the King Retreat Center on the weekend of Jan 19—21, 2007. Don't miss out on this great experience of spiritual and physical renewal. Space is limited, so make your reservation early. Phone Chuck Rose at 725-7119 or Ed Clark at 725-3371 to make a reservation, or call the Retreat Center at 725-4720. Relatives and friends are welcome to come together. View the Center at: www.passionist.org/retreats/christtheking.

A SPECIAL NOTE OF THANKS

Thank you to everyone at Holy Family Church and my brother Knights for prayers, get well cards, calls, visits and support that I received after suffering a heart attack. I am also appreciative of the cards and condolences received after the passing of my mother. God bless you all during this Holy Season and thank you once again.

Johnnie P. Guerra

Prayer Opportunities

WORLD APOSTOLATE OF FATIMA:

Pope Benedict XVI has elevated the World Apostolate of Fatima (The Blue Army.) It is now officially associated with the Pontifical Council for the Laity in Rome. We are happy to offer these prayers here at Holy Family. All are welcome to join us Mondays after the 8:30 am Mass in St. Mary Hall. For information, please call Phyllis, 725-0218 or Phyllis, 725-5358.

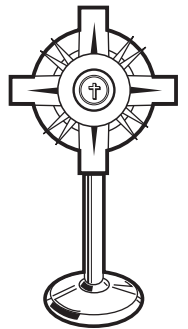
VOCATIONS CROSS

Each week a parish family is presented with the Vocations Cross to take home for the week and asked to pray daily for an increase in vocations to the priesthood and religious life. The next Sunday, the family returns the cross and another family is presented the cross to pray for vocations. If you are interested in taking the Vocation Cross home, please contact Young Stewart at 332-8732.



EUCCHARISTIC ADORATION:

Jesus stays with us day and night in the Blessed Sacrament, blessing us with the grace that encourages us, consoles us, strengthens us, guides us and inspires us to place our trust in Him. We stay with the Real Presence of Jesus in Eucharistic Adoration to be more personally involved with Him and to keep the Eucharist central in our lives. Spending time with Jesus in the Eucharist enables us to build a truly personal relationship with Him. Come into His presence in our beautiful chapel - He is looking forward to your visit!



BLESSED SACRAMENT CHAPEL VISITING HOURS:

Monday – Friday	9:00 am – 9:00 pm
Saturday	9:00 am – 3:30 pm
Sunday	1:30 pm – 5:00 pm

Also in the chapel: Each day at 9:00 am a community Rosary and Chaplet of Mercy are prayed, and at 3:00 pm the Chaplet of Mercy is prayed.

DOMINICAN LAITY AT HOLY FAMILY

The Dominican Laity meets here at Holy Family on the first Sunday of every month in St. Mary Hall from 1–3 pm. Come and join us in a way of life of prayer, both private and liturgical, the study of the sacred truth, the sharing of our spiritual life with others in the community, and in our apostolic outreach. For further information call Phyllis Sale at 725-5358.



A Message from Pope Benedict XVI to Catholic Parents:

- * The key response to today's increasingly secularized communities is for adults to renew and deepen their faith in Christ so they can be authentic examples and teachers of Christian living to future generations, Pope Benedict XVI said.
- * The pope underlined the importance of living and transmitting faith in the family.
- * He urged all the world's families to be "authentic communities of love and life in which the flame of faith may be handed down from generation to generation."
- * Parents must be committed to deepen their own knowledge of the faith. This should also be accompanied by prayer and diligent practice of the sacraments of confession and the Eucharist, the pope said.
- * It may happen that a child's interest in Christ and his or her own deepening of faith through Christian initiation could become "a useful occasion for the parents to return to the church and delve further into the beauty and truth of the Gospel."

Some reasons to attend Mass / Common questions:

- * If you want to spend eternity with Christ you need to get to know him now.
- * It's your best way to identify yourself with Christ's sacrifice on the cross.
- * Some of the greatest people in history were Massgoers: St. Francis, Blessed Mother Teresa, Pope John Paul II.
- * If you knew Jesus would be somewhere, wouldn't you go see him?
- * Statistics say that people who go to Church are less stressed.
- * It's the best way to pray for your family and friends – and to cope with troubled times.
- * You'll become a better person at Mass. The more you are part of God's life, the better you'll be.
- * Life is complicated. Get directions that work – from the One who created life.
- * It's your way to go most directly through Jesus Christ to God the Father by the power of the Holy Spirit in prayer.
- * Is one hour too much to give to God? How many do you spend on other priorities?

What's in it for me? Everything! God desires only and always your good. He became one of us in large part to give us himself in the Mass. Why should you deny yourself such a gift?

I don't need to go to Mass to get close to God. At Mass, you receive God himself – Jesus Christ truly present in the sacrament. Even a beautiful mountain vista can't compare to that.

I had a bad experience with the Church. This is always sad. But some of us may have had bad teachers – and we know the whole education system isn't bad. Jesus wants to bring you healing at Mass.

I don't get anything out of Mass. Learn about what it does: joins us to Christ, separates us from sin, commits us to the poor, prepares us for heaven.

I don't have the time. There are 24 hours a day, 168 hours a week. Mass takes one hour. That's less than 1% of your week. You have the time; find it.

I'm a sinner. I don't deserve to be at Mass. Welcome to the club! We are a Church of saved sinners. None of us deserves to be here. See you at the confessional . . .



ADVENT - A Season of Preparation and Anticipation

PRAYERS AROUND THE CHRISTMAS TREE

The leader may begin:

In the beginning God made the world and saw it was good. Long ago, God placed a tree in the garden of paradise as his gift to all human beings, a tree of wisdom and knowledge and laden with every good thing. Our Christmas Tree reminds us of that tree. Long ago too, God's kindness appeared in the coming of Christ, who is our hope of eternal life. This tree is a sign of Christ's blessings.

A Reading from the Book of Genesis

Genesis 2: 4-9

This is the story of the heavens and the earth after their creation.

When the Lord God made the earth and the heavens, there was neither shrub nor plant growing on the earth, because the Lord God had sent no rain; nor was there anyone to till the ground...

The Lord God formed a human being from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, so that he became a living creature.

The Lord God planted a garden in Eden away to the east, and in it he put the man he had formed... and in the middle of the garden he set the tree of life.

Then all pray:

Lord, our God,

The heavens are the work of your hands,
the moon and the stars you made;
the earth and the sea and every living creature
came into being by your word. And all of us, too.

May this tree bring cheer to this house
through Jesus Christ your good and holy Son,
who brings life and beauty to us and to our world.
Lighting this tree, we hope in His promise.

The lights of the tree are illuminated and a carol may be sung.

PRAYERS AT A CHRISTMAS MANGER

The leader may say:

It was St. Francis of Assisi who first popularized the Christmas manger. Wanting to see how Christ was born with his own eyes, he had a stable and some images made before Christmas and then invited his neighbors and friends to come and join him at his "Bethlehem." As we look on our manger, may the Christmas story unfold before our eyes, too.

Listen to the Holy Gospel according to Luke: Luke 2:1-7

In those days a decree was issued by the emperor Augustus for a census to be taken throughout the Roman world. This was the first Registration of its kind; it took place when Quirinius was governor of Syria. Everyone made his way to his own town to be registered. Joseph went up to Judaea from the town of Nazareth in Galilee, to register in the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was of the house of David by descent; and with him went Mary, his betrothed, who was expecting her child.

(The figures are then placed in the manger, and after a short period of quiet, the reading continues.)

While they were there, the time came for her to have her baby, and she gave birth to a son, her first born. She wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

Then all pray:

O God,

whose mighty Son was born in Bethlehem those days long ago,
lead us to that same poor place, where Mary laid her tiny Child.
And as we look on in wonder and praise,
make us welcome him in all new life,
see him in the poor, and care for his handiwork
the earth, the sky and the sea.

O God, bless us again in your great love.

We pray for this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

A Christmas song may conclude the blessing.

UPCOMING FAITH FORMATION OPPORTUNITIES THROUGHOUT THE DIOCESE OF SACRAMENTO

For more information about these workshops, please contact

Dr. Holly Peterson, Coordinator for Evangelization and Catechesis at 916.733.0153.

January Programs

"The Gospel of Luke" presented by Art Wehr, S.J.-St. Ignatius Church, Sacramento, January 9, 16, 23, 30; 10-11:30 am session or 7-8:30 pm session. Cost: \$10 for the series.

"Celebration of the Sacraments of Initiation" Catechetical Leader Workshop presented by Diocesan Committee for RCIA, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Sacramento, January 25th 9:30 am-noon. Cost: \$20.

"A Methodology for Teaching" presented by Holly Peterson, Ed.D., St. Anthony Parish, Mt. Shasta, January 31, 7-9 pm. Cost: free.

Lay Formation Institute

The Lay Formation Institute begins in January in Sacramento, and it is open to all adults interested in developing their faith. For more information on the Institute please contact the Pastoral Center.

The first-of-seven courses will be:

Foundations of Faith-Foundations of Catholicism, taught by Rev. Edward Fassett, S.J.-Pastoral Center, Sacramento, January 26th (6:30-9 pm) and January 27th (8:30 am-4:00 pm).

Course will fulfill 8 hours of credit towards Basic Catechetical Certification. Cost: \$25.