

**Advent 2016**

We continue on Our Advent Journey and this week we give special attention to Our Blessed Mother. On Thursday **December 8** the church celebrates the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception at 8:15AM and 7PM. This is a Holy Day of Obligation and this teaching about Mary being immaculately conceived so she could be the Mother of God was formulated, promoted, and defended by the Franciscans.

From the Pastor

Who Is Mary?

Mary is the greatest gift that God has made to mankind. She is the Mother of God: “the masterpiece of the Creator, the clear reflection of God, a miracle of nature and grace, beauty beyond speech, the most splendid dawn, the crown of the Saints, the sanctuary of the mystical heights, the minister of triumph, the All-Holy... It is she to whom the unique prodigy of being Immaculate, most perfect, and most pure belongs...” (Pope Paul VI). Mary has been, is, and will ever be the best known and most loved Woman of all humanity.

Is it necessary to know Our Lady?

Our Lady occupies a place of prominence not only in the history of the salvation of the human race, but also in the spiritual life of every Christian. As a result it is useful, or rather proper and necessary, to know profoundly her sublime mission, her grand privileges and the mystery of her life. Knowledge of Mary is helpful for knowing Jesus better. The more one knows Our Lady, the better one can comprehend and love Jesus.

The Immaculate

The first privilege that Our Lady received from God in view of her divine Maternity was to be conceived “Immaculate”. While all are born with original sin, that is to say without sanctifying grace, Our Lady was the only human creature to receive from God a soul filled with grace from the very first moment of her life. She was the first flower to bud forth on the earth without being poisoned and stained by the sin of Adam.

In her presence the Devil will always be constrained to take flight.

How can one give proof of the privilege of the Immaculate Conception from Sacred Scripture?

One can give proof of the privilege of the Immaculate Conception from the words of God to the Devil after the original sin: ***“I will put enmity between thee and the Woman, and thy seed and her Seed; she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for thy heel”***(Gn. 3,15).

The enmity between the Devil (the serpent) and Mary (the Woman) that God announces will be complete and endure forever. If Our Lady had been subject to the Devil even for just an instant, the enmity would not have been complete. Thus Our Lady was never a slave of Satan, that is to say that her soul, by a singular privilege of God, was never tainted by original sin.

What other text of the Sacred Scripture proves the privilege of the Immaculate Conception?

Another proof of the privilege of the Immaculate Conception can be found in the words with which the Angel Gabriel saluted the Blessed Virgin Mary: ***“Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee”***(Lk. 1,28).

The Archangel’s greeting makes us understand Mary’s sublime holiness. St. Gabriel did not call Mary by her name, but called her ***“full of grace”***. These words show that Our Lady had been and remained a friend of God and full of every grace. One defect, even a slight one, would have been enough to hinder the Angel from calling her ***“full of grace”***. Hence Mary was always Immaculate, without a shadow of original sin.

GOSPEL FOR THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT (December 11TH)**MATTHEW 11:2-11**

When John the Baptist heard in prison of the works of the Christ, he sent his disciples to Jesus with this question, “Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?” Jesus said to them in reply, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. And blessed is the one who takes no offense at me.” As they were going off, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John, “What did you go out to the desert to see? A reed swayed by the wind? Then what did you go out to see? Someone dressed in fine clothing? Those who wear fine clothing are in royal palaces. Then why did you go out? To see a prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written: *Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way before you.* Amen, I say to you, among those born of women there has been none greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.”

ALPHA FOR ADULTS

Join us for Alpha and our retreat. We will ponder the Questions of Life and Faith. We will Adore, Worship and come into communion with the Lord! We will begin with a meal at 6:00pm--in Stack Center all are welcome.

UPCOMING TALK FOR ALPHA

- **Dec. 15:** *Who is Jesus?*
- **Feb. 24-26:** *Parish Retreat*

Jesus is waiting to spend time with you! Come away and spend time with the Lord to be renewed. Our first *Parish Retreat* will be on **February 24th-26th** at The Presentation Retreat Center the cost is \$225 per person for the weekend, financial assistance is available. All are welcome. Contact the Parish office for more information or to reserve your spot (510) 537-0806



FESTIVAL RESULTS ARE IN !

We are pleased to announce the results of our Fall Festival. We received \$43,802 in net profit.

As is our tradition we commit 10% of our net profit to local charities benefiting families and children.

Our Lady of Grace School received \$24,000 of the net income and \$18,000 will be used for expenses in the Parish programs. Thank you once again to all those who contributed to the success of our annual Parish Fall Festival.



CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

Again, this year, we are inviting you to remember family members and friends through a Flower Offering which will help us to purchase plants and other decorations we need to beautify our sanctuary. You may list the names of loved ones you wish to remember or memorialize by using the special flower envelopes --or by submitting the name to the Parish Office. A list of names of all who are remembered will be available after Christmas. Thank you for considering this thoughtful and helpful way to remember those you love.



THE SOLEMNITY OF THE FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Our Holy Day Masses honoring Mary on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception will be celebrated on Thursday, **December 8th** at 8:15am (School children liturgy) and 7:00pm.



ADVENT LESSONS AND CAROLS

Sunday, afternoon **December 4th** you are invited to Advent Lessons & Carols at 4:00pm in the Church followed by wine & cheese at 5:00pm in Stack Center. There is no cost to you, but reservations are required. Please RSVP to Bonnie after Mass, or leave a message in the Parish Office.



OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE CELEBRATION DECEMBER 12TH

The Hispanic Group invites the entire Parish community to honor Our Lady of Guadalupe on Her Feast Day, Monday, **December 12th**, beginning with Mañanitas, at 5:30am in the Church, followed by a reception in Stack Center. A Our Lady of Guadalupe mass will be held at 7:00pm in the church followed by a reception in Stack Center.

El Grupo Hispano invita a toda la comunidad parroquial a honrar a Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe el lunes, **12 de diciembre**, comenzando con Mañanitas, a las 5:30 am en la Iglesia, un recepción sigue en el Stack Center. Una misa de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe se llevará a cabo a las 7:00 pm en la iglesia seguido por una recepción en el Stack Center.

CHRISTMAS POSADA DECEMBER 18th

The Hispanic Group is hosting a Christmas Posada and Pot Luck on **December 18th** after the 1:30pm Spanish Mass in Stack Center.

El grupo hispano les invita a la posada navidena el 18 de diciembre despues de la misa de las 1:30pm.



**FESCO &
CASTRO VALLEY OUTREACH**
Christmas Giving Trees

Our Lady of Grace is helping the families of Castro Valley this Christmas with our Giving Trees. As members of CV Outreach, an organization dedicated to helping children from our CV Schools have a happy holiday season, we are sponsoring 5 families. Each family member has ornaments on our Giving Trees, which you will find in the church, in Stack after church, and in the school and parish offices. Please take an ornament to help a child have a blessed holiday.

All gifts need to be returned with the ornament, box and receipt, unwrapped to the parish office by **Sunday, December 11th** in order for our REC students & Parent Group members to catalog and wrap.

In addition to helping CV Outreach, we are helping FESCO keep their programs running. They are asking for monetary donations. Donation envelopes are on the Giving Trees. Please return donations to the parish office. *Thank You & Merry Christmas*



**ADVENT CONFESSIONS
READY THE WAY OF THE LORD**

Confessions will be available during Advent before **Adoration** on Thursday **December 15th and 22nd** at 7:00pm and Saturday Confession from 3:30 - 4:30pm.

**CATHOLIC CAMPAIGN
FOR HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

There is still time to respond to the needs of the poor and low income in our Diocese through the Catholic Campaign for Human Development. A quarter of the proceeds from this collection stay in the Diocese to support efforts in our community. Envelopes are in the pews for your use in this appeal.



**DEVOTIONAL CANDLES
PLEASE NOTE: NEW PRICE**

Candles for our candle stand are available for purchase in the Parish Office or in the Sacristy after mass on Sundays. The candles will burn for 5 days. The cost per candle is \$4.00. The glass globes in the candle stand must be left in the church.

SUNDAY COLLECTION

Stewardship of treasure involves trust in God. You have to really believe in God's Providence and trust that if you give ten percent of your income to the Church and charity for example, God will help you live on the rest.

Offerings of November 20th:

Sunday Plate:	\$ 7,987.00
Last Year this week	\$ 7,240.00
Weekly Budgeted Goal:	\$ 8,920.00
Year-to-date this year:	\$392,392.00
Year-to-date last year:	\$374,101.00

May God bless your continuing generosity.



Your Prayers Are Requested

Please lift up in your prayer those many among us who are ill and those who have asked for our prayerful remembrance:

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| Kathleen Andrews | Bridgett Foscalina |
| Rolando Barrios | Robert Gallicano |
| James Barthman | Nicholas Guinea |
| Peggy Burton | Pat Geiger |
| Leonardo Cabardo | Byron Griffith |
| Paris Dahle | Sheila Janes |
| Kathleen Denning | Elaine Jordan |
| Julie Dillon | Richard Martin |
| Carol Dimaio | Pat Silva |
| Claudia Dobbs | Florence Sharp |
| Estela Enriquez | Iwan Tunggal |
| Mary Franks | James Van Wert |

As we pray for an end to war and violence in our world, let us remember in prayer those family members of our parish community serving on active duty, including:

DAVID SANCHEZ MICHAEL SANCHEZ

Please remember in your prayers the recently deceased in our parish families and all who mourn the loss of a loved one.

MAUREEN MAITLAND

**OLG CYO
HELP WANTED**

The OLG CYO Board is looking for potential board members for the upcoming year. The last year we had a full and active board was 2006. Since that time several dedicated individuals, some without children in the program have continued to run this program that benefits children in our communities'. If you are interested and feel you could contribute to this very important parish ministry please contact Colleen Lindberg in the parish office.

**CATHOLIC VOICE ANNUAL APPEAL
STILL TIME TO DONATE FOR THIS YEAR !**

Please consider a donation to the annual appeal for The Catholic Voice. Your donation helps our Parish offset its payment for this important communication ministry. The Voice is the only regular source of Catholic news and information delivered to all parishioners in the Diocese. *Please be generous in your support our Parish pays \$707.00 each month for this subscription. Your donation of \$25.00 would help offset the parish expense.*

Checks should be made payable to Our Lady of Grace. Envelopes are in the pews.

**OUR LADY OF GRACE SCHOOL
FUNDRAISER**

Fox Sox is offering 30% off their great socks for the holidays. These socks make great gifts for adults and children. Just go to www.FoxSox.com and click on "Shop Online" to get started. Order soon as popular styles may sell out! Use promo code: PR16OLG and get a discount as well as earning money for our school!

Hurry offer expires December 31st.

**ADORATION OF THE
BLESSED SACRAMENT
SCHEDULE**



Join us every Thursday for Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament at 7:00pm and the First Saturday of the month following the 8:30am Mass in the church.

THIS WEEK

Sunday, December 4th:

Coffee & Donuts After 9:30am Mass
Children's Liturgy
9:30am--Mass

Religious Education Classes
11:00am--Stack Center - English
11:30am--Stack Center - Bilingual

Youth Alpha Meal, Video and Discussion
6:00pm--Stack Center

Monday, December 5th:

Women's Bible Study:
7:00pm--Stack Center Conference Room

Tuesday, December 6th:

Bible Study:
9:30am--Parish Office

Religious Education Classes:
3:45pm--Stack Center
Baptismal Class:
7:00pm--Parish Office

Men's Bible Study:
7:00pm--Parish Office

RCIA Inquiry:
7:00pm--Stack Center Conference Room

Wednesday, December 7th:

Men of Faith Meeting:
7:00pm--Parish Office

Thursday, December 8th:

Serenity Group
8:00pm--Stack Center

Friday, December 9th:

Hispanic Triduum:
7:00pm--Church

Saturday, December 3rd:

Hispanic Triduum
7:00pm--Church

Sunday, December 4th:

Coffee & Donuts After 9:30am Mass
Children's Liturgy
9:30am--Mass

Religious Education Classes
11:00am--Stack Center - English
11:30am--Stack Center - Bilingual

Youth Alpha Meal, Video and Discussion
6:00pm--Stack Center

Mass Intentions for the Week

Please note:

All masses will be celebrated in the Church.

MONDAY, December 5th

7:00am Deb Telles (D)

TUESDAY, December 6th

St. Nicholas, Bishop

7:00am Velasquez & Moran Families (D)

WEDNESDAY, December 7th

St. Ambrose, Bishop, Dr. of the Church

8:15am Helen Maes (D)

THURSDAY, December 8th

**THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF
THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY**

8:15am Mike DeGuzman (D)

7:00pm Immaculate Conception Mass

FRIDAY, December 9th

St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatotzin

7:00am Joe & Marie Silveria (D)

SATURDAY, December 10th

8:30am Lee, Nick, Yaka & Frank Music (D)

SUNDAY, December 11th

11:30am Celestina & Meliton Lavigan (D)

HOLIDAY FOOD BOXES

St. Vincent de Paul is once again asking for your help to fill our Holiday Food Boxes. Items needed Christmas baskets: green beans, gravy, fried onion rings, cream of mushroom soup, canned yams, cranberry sauce, \$15-20 gift cards to Safeway, Lucky or Grocery Outlet

We thank you for your generosity in the past and for allowing us to help those in need in our community.



RCIA INQUIRY

RCIA Inquiry Group meets **Tuesdays** at 7:00pm in Our Lady of Grace Room in Stack Center. You may join at any-time. This group is offered for those exploring membership in the Catholic Church. The next meeting will be **December 6th**.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK:

December 5th through December 11th

- Monday: Isaiah 35:1-10; Luke 5:17-26
- Tuesday: Isaiah 40:1-11; Matthew 18:12-14
- Wednesday: Isaiah 40:25-31; Matthew 11:28-30
- Thursday: Genesis 3:9-15, 20;
Ephesians 1:3-6,11-12; Luke 1:26-38
- Friday: Isaiah 48:17-19; Matthew 11:16-19
- Saturday: Sirach 48:1-4, 9-11;
Matthew 17:9a, 10-13
- Sunday: Isaiah 35:1-6a, 10; James 5:7-10
Matthew 11:2-11



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**CRAB FEED ??
JANUARY 28th ???**

The OLG Crab Feed is scheduled and the fisherman are catching crab but we do not have a committee assembled to make it happen as of now! Are you interested in helping put together our Crab Feed this year? This event has traditionally benefited our CYO program with uniforms, equipment and repairs to the gym as well as our parish center. Interested?? Call the Parish office and let us know.

**FATIMA & LOURDES PILGRIMAGE
CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE APPARITIONS AT FATIMA!!**

Information and brochures for Fr. Tom's pilgrimage to Fatima and Lourdes are available in the parish office. The eleven day trip begins **October 3rd, 2017** and is only \$3,499 per person. The trip includes round-trip air from San Francisco, first class/select hotels, most meals and services of a professional tour director. Space is limited so book early to avoid disappointment.

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This week we extend our gratitude to:

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