

**Alpha is Here!**

Come one and all on Thursday, December 1 for our first Alpha gathering. Alpha is for discussing questions of life. Our Question this week: *Is there more to life than this?* At 6PM we will break bread as we have dinner and get to know each other and by 7PM we watch our Alpha Video and begin our discussion on the purpose of life. Please call the office to let us know you are coming so we can prepare enough food. The dinner and discussion are free but we will take donations to help with the cost of supplies for the dinner and to assist with the cost of the retreat.

As I have explored Alpha with our youth it has touched my heart as I remember when I asked the questions which led me to encounter and give my life in His service. I often have been brought to tears as I remember how Jesus was introduced to me and how my life has never been the same.

As we go through the questions of life, faith, and belief I will give some connections to the faith Journey of St. Francis and my own. May we encounter the fire of God who loves us as we meet Jesus.

Advent is Here

Beginning the Church's liturgical year, Advent (from, "ad-venire" in Latin or "to come to") is the season encompassing the four Sundays (and weekdays) leading up to the celebration of Christmas.

The Advent season is a time of preparation that directs our hearts and minds to Christ's second coming at the end of time and also to the anniversary of the Lord's birth on Christmas. The final days of Advent, from December 17 to December 24, focus particularly on our preparation for the celebrations of the Nativity of our Lord (Christmas). Advent devotions including the Advent wreath, remind us of the meaning of the season.

Immaculate Conception

Celebrate Mass on Thursday **December 8** at 8:15AM and 7PM. This is a Holy Day of Obligation where we celebrate the Immaculate Conception of Mary in anticipation of her being the Mother of God. On May 13, 1846 the bishops of the United States who were gathered in the residence of the Archbishop and under his chairmanship for the third private meeting of the Council, which began at nine in the morning, adopted a decree by which they chose the Blessed Virgin Mary, conceived without sin, as Patroness of the United States. The Bishops Declared: With enthusiastic acclaim and with unanimous approval and consent, the Fathers [of the Council] have chosen the Blessed Virgin Mary, conceived without sin, as the Patroness of the United States of America.

Peace
Fr. Tom

GOSPEL FOR SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT (December 4TH)**MATTHEW 3:1-12**

John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the desert of Judea and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!” It was of him that the prophet Isaiah had spoken when he said: A voice of one crying out in the desert, Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths. John wore clothing made of camel’s hair and had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. At that time Jerusalem, all Judea, and the whole region around the Jordan were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the Jordan River as they acknowledged their sins.

When he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance. And do not presume to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I tell you, God can raise up children to Abraham from these stones. Even now the ax lies at the root of the trees. Therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire. I am baptizing you with water, for repentance, but the one who is coming after me is mightier than I. I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in his hand. He will clear his threshing floor and gather his wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

ALPHA FOR ADULTS

Join us for Alpha and our retreat. Alpha begins this week **December 1st** at 6pm in Stack Center. 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--all are welcome.

TALKS FOR ALPHA

- Dec. 1: *Is there more to life than this?*
- Dec. 15: *Who is Jesus?*
- Jan. 12: *Why did Jesus die?*
- Jan. 19: *How can I have faith?*
- Jan. 26: *How do I Pray?*
- Feb. 2: *Why read the Bible?*
- Feb. 9: *How does God guide us?*
- Feb. 16: *Who is the Holy Spirit?*
- 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



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, & 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***



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.

AN OLD FASHIONED CHRISTMAS DECEMBER 3rd IN STACK CENTER

Following the 5:00pm Mass on Saturday, **December 3rd** our school students will present the Christmas story. After the performance all are invited to Stack Center for our Tree Lighting, a visit from Santa and snacks and time for holiday fellowship. All are invited!



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 second Our Lady of Guadalupe mass will be held at 7:00pm in the church followed by a reception in Stack Center.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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:	\$ 8,447.00
Last Year this week	\$ 8,197.00
Weekly Budgeted Goal:	\$ 8,920.00
Year-to-date this year:	\$383,448.00
Year-to-date last year:	\$389,650.00

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 Foscilina
Rolando Barrios	Nicholas Guinea
James Barthman	Pat Geiger
Peggy Burton	Byron Griffith
Leonardo Cabardo	Sheila Janes
Paris Dahle	Elaine Jordan
Kathleen Denning	Richard Martin
Julie Dillon	Mike Roth
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.

JESUS LOPEZ

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.

GRIEF WORKSHOP

Stepping Stones on Your Grief Journey

The death of a loved one is unlike any other loss. Whether the death was sudden or tragic, or one with warning and preparation, the reality of death leaves most of us in a state of shock, confusion and sadness. Join us bi-monthly and let us accompany you on your healing journey.

St. Elizabeth Seton Church, 4001 Stoneridge Dr. Pleasanton; Second and Fourth Thursday evenings at 7:30pm, Dec. 8, 22, Jan. 12, 26 and Feb. 9, 23. No pre-registration is necessary. These sessions are open to all, regardless of religious affiliation.

Please call Eleanor Flatley at 925-846-8708 for more information.



RCIA INQUIRY

RCIA Inquiry Group meets Tuesdays at 7:00pm in Our Lady of Grace Room in Stack Center. You may join at anytime. This group is offered for those exploring membership in the Catholic Church. The next meeting will be November 29th.



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. Simply insert the plastic candle purchased from the Parish in to the glass globe in the candle stand.

THIS WEEK

Sunday, November 27th:

- Coffee & Donuts After 9:30am Mass only*
- Children's Liturgy
- 9:30am--Mass
- Parish Registration
- 10:30am--Stack Center
- Welcome the Refugee Family
- 11:30am--Mass
- Potluck Reception for Refugee Family
- 12:30--Stack Center

Tuesday, November 29th:

- Bible Study:
- 9:30am--Parish Office
- Religious Education Classes:
- 3:45pm--Stack Center
- Men's Bible Study:
- 7:00pm--Parish Office
- RCIA Inquiry:
- 7:00pm--Stack Center Conference Room

Thursday, December 1st:

- Adult Alpha Series*
- 6:00pm--Stack Center
- Adoration
- 7:00pm--Church
- Serenity Group
- 8:00pm--Stack Center

Saturday, December 3rd:

- Adoration
- 8:30pm--Church
- Old Fashion Christmas & Tree Lighting
- 5:00pm--Stack Center

Sunday, December 4th:

- Coffee & Donuts After 9:30am Mass only*
- 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 for the Intentions Week

Please note:

All masses will be celebrated in the Church.

MONDAY, November 28th

St. James of the Marches, OFM, Conv., priest
7:00am Ernie Selmeczki (D)

TUESDAY, November 29th

All Saints of the Seraphic OFM, Conv.
7:00am Libby Romani (D)

WEDNESDAY, November 30th

St. Andrew, Apostle
8:15am Anna Friedeberg (L)

THURSDAY, December 1st

7:00am Rudy & Augie Enriquez (D)

FRIDAY, December 2nd

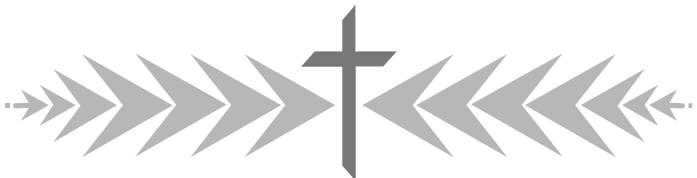
Blessed Raphael Chylinski, OFM, Conv.
7:00am Ernesto Garcia (D)

SATURDAY, December 3rd

St. Francis Xavier, Priest
8:30am Marylou Maravella (D)

SUNDAY, December 4th

11:30am Mario & Rita Venturini (D)



ROSARY FOR WORLD PEACE

The rosary will be recited for World Peace after the 7:00 am Mass each Monday in the Church. Please join us.



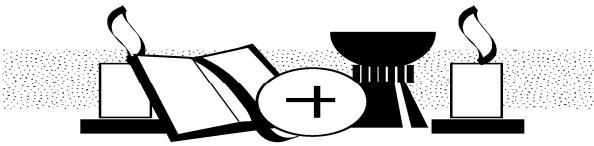
ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT NEW SCHEDULE

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.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK:

November 28th through December 4th

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|------------|--|
| Monday: | Isaiah 4:2-6; Matthew 8:5-11 |
| Tuesday: | Isaiah 11:1-10; Luke 10:21-24 |
| Wednesday: | Romans 10:9-18; Matthew 4:18-22 |
| Thursday: | Isaiah 26:1-6; Matthew 7:21, 24-27 |
| Friday: | Isaiah 29:17-24; Matthew 9:27-31 |
| Saturday: | Isaiah 30:19-21, 23-26;
Matthew 9:35b-10:1, 5a, 6-8 |
| Sunday: | Isaiah 11:1-10;
Romans 15:4-9
Matthew 3:1-12 |



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CRAB FEED ?? JANUARY 28th ???

The 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.

THANK THEM WITH YOUR SUPPORT

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This week we extend our gratitude to:

MERLE'S HALLMARK SHOP