

Entering the Year of Mercy

From the Pastor Pope Francis opened the Year of Mercy in a war zone last Sunday at the Bangui Cathedral in the Central African Republic. Pope Francis at a prayer vigil said: "The

Jubilee Year of Mercy, which I just opened particularly for you, dear Central African and African friends, rightly reminds us that God is waiting for us, with arms wide open, as we see the beautiful image of the Father who welcomes the Prodigal Son". How do we love in a war zone? We turn to our Merciful and Loving God and ask for mercy. Have Mercy on us Lord! Receiving God's Mercy we are changed and transformation begins as we learn to Love how God loves. St. Maximilian Kolbe speaks of this transformation: "Finally, love for one's neighbor. Loving our neighbor, not because he is "nice," worthwhile, wealthy, influential, or just because he is grateful....

Genuine love rises above the creature and plunges into God. In Him, for Him and through Him we can love everyone, be they good or bad, friends or foes. We can offer a helping hand, full of love to everyone; we can pray for all, suffer for all, wish good to all, wish happiness to all, because that is God's will!..." St. Maximilian Kolbe

St. Faustina and the Divine Mercy

Sister Faustina was a young, uneducated nun in a convent of the Congregation of Sisters of Our Lady of Mercy in Poland during the 1930s. She came from a poor family that struggled during the years of World War I. She had only three years of simple education, so hers were the humblest tasks in the convent, usually in the kitchen or garden. However, she received extraordinary revelations — or messages — from our Lord Jesus. Jesus asked Sr. Faustina to record these experiences, which she compiled into notebooks. These notebooks are known today as the *Diary of Saint Maria Faustina Kowalska*, and the words contained within are God's loving message of Divine Mercy.

Though the Divine Mercy message is not new to the teachings of the Church, Sr. Faustina's Diary sparked a great movement, and a strong and significant focus on the mercy of Christ. Saint John Paul II canonized Sr. Faustina in 2000 making her the "first saint of the new millennium." Speaking of Sr. Faustina and the importance of the message contained in her Diary, the Pope called her "the great apostle of Divine Mercy in our time." Join us for the live performance of the life and message of St. Faustina on **January 31** at 7PM at the Castro Valley Performing Arts Center.

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception (Patroness of the United States)

The Jubilee Year of Mercy begins December 8 at 8:30AM and 7PM

Why is the Immaculate Conception important? As I ponder the teaching I am brought to the mystery of incarnation, that God became human in Jesus Christ. We know that Mary is the Mother of Jesus and the Mother of God, *theotokos* the one who bears Christ. Since God is without sin, a pure sinless person must give Jesus his humanity. Mary was given a singular grace of being Immaculately Conceived so she could respond without the corruption of sin to be the Mother of God. In the Immaculate

Conception, Gods plan to break into human history to love us and save fallen humanity. Our Merciful God breaks into human history to save us. Mary in the immaculate Conception is the New Eve that is free to say yes to God and respond to the invitation of God to be God's Children. The curse of sin and death is broken as humanity through the Immaculate Virgin Mary is brought into relationship with Trinitarian Love as She is Daughter of the creator, Mother of Christ, and Spouse of the Holy Spirit.

The Apostolic Constitution «Ineffabilis Deus», published on 8th December 1854, by Blessed Pope Pius IX, echoes in a remarkable way Scotus' own theology regarding the privilege of the Immaculate Conception in the following solemn proclamation of this Dogma of Catholic faith: "we pronounce and we define the doctrine which holds that the most Blessed Virgin Mary, in the very first moments of her Conception, through the singular grace of Almighty God, and through the foresight of the merits of Christ Jesus, Savior of the human race, was preserved immune from all stains of original sin."

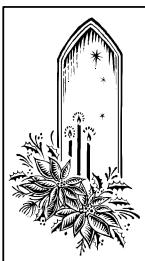


THE SOLEMNITY OF THE FEAST OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

Our Holy Day Masses honoring Mary on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception will be celebrated in the church on Tuesday, **December 8th** at 8:30am (School children liturgy) and 7:00pm.

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, Saturday, **December 12th**, beginning with Mananitas, at 6:00am in the Church, followed by mass in Spanish at 7:00am. Please note this will be the only morning mass on **December 12th**.



"ADVENT LESSONS AND CAROLS"

You are invited to an evening of music and dinner on the third Sunday in Advent, **December 13th**. Lessons & Carols is simply the hearing of Sacred Scripture and the singing of hymns and songs of praise about God's loving purpose made known to us in the incarnation of his holy Child Jesus. The program begins at 4:00pm in the church. Dinner follows the program and is provided by the Choir. There is no charge **but reservations must be made.** Please contact the parish office or see Bonnie Ricketts or Claudia Dobbs after mass.

NEWS FROM ICF

It's that time of the year for loving and giving, so the ICF invites you to our Christmas party on Thursday, **December 10th**. The fun will begin at 5:30pm with dinner at 6:30, reservations are required, deadline is Monday December 7th, the cost is \$10.00. The giving is from us/you to Birthright. They are in need of newborn (0-3 months), diapers, bibs and layette items. Help us give these newborns a warm welcome. For reservations please call either Stella Taddei at 510-581-5863 or Juanita Madrid at 510-582-7242.



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.



ADVENT CONFESIONS READY THE WAY OF THE LORD

Confessions will be available during Advent Monday Mornings 7:30am until 8:00am on **December 7th, 14th, 21st**: Thursday Adoration with Confession on **December 3rd, 10th, 17th** at 7:00pm to 8:00pm and Saturday Confession 3:30 – 4:30pm.

OPENING OF THE HOLY DOOR FOR THE YEAR OF MERCY IN OAKLAND CATHEDRAL OF CHRIST THE LIGHT

On Sunday, **December 13th** (Third Sunday of Advent), Bishop Barber will celebrate Mass at the Cathedral at 10:00am, inaugurating the Jubilee of Mercy. That same day he will be opening the *Holy Door* at the Cathedral, that will remain opened for the pilgrims throughout the Holy Year. All are invited to attend.

RELIGIOUS RETIREMENT COLLECTION DECEMBER 13th

Please give to those who have given a lifetime. This annual appeal helps retired sister, brother and religious older priest, who spent their lives in church ministries such as education, health care and social service. Envelopes are in the pews and at the entrances of the church for your use. Please give generously. Religious women and men thank you for each merciful action you take on behalf of others and pray for your spiritual peace.

**JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY
FAUSTINA: MESSENGER OF DIVINE MERCY
JANUARY 31, 2016**

Our Lady of Grace Church and School invite you to the live theatrical one-woman drama performed by actress Maria Vargo and directed by Leonardo Delfilippis of Saint Luke Productions, to be presented at Castro Valley Center for the Arts on Sunday, January 31st at 7:00pm. Tickets: \$15.00 Adult, \$12.00 Senior; \$40.00 Family of Four. \$12.00 Youth 17 and under. Suitable for ages 12 and up.

In this Multimedia Play audiences experience firsthand the spirit and life of Polish mystic Saint Faustina, whose personal encounters with Jesus have inspired a world-wide devotion to Christ's Divine Mercy. A parallel modern story with the drama offers audiences a compelling personal connection to the current moral issues of our times. Audiences are calling the production a "wake-up call."

This is a wonderful opportunity to continue the celebration of the Jubilee Year of Mercy. *Call the Parish office to reserve your tickets now.*

Read more about the play, *Faustina: Messenger of Divine Mercy*, online at the National Catholic Register and on the Faustina website.

**TAKE ACTION-STAND IN SOLIDARITY
WITH SYRIAN REFUGEES**

In the wake of the tragic events in Paris on November 13th, Catholic Charities of the East Bay urges the community to stand in solidarity with the hundreds of thousands of Syrians and others displaced by the violence in their homeland.

While this is a complex issue, we urge our community to avoid the impulse to blame all refugees for the actions of terrorist organizations. They, too, are victims of violence and persecution and seek a place of safety and freedom. Instead, let us stand firm and serve the marginalized, just as we pray for continued healing and safety in our communities.

We urge you to take action TODAY! Call Steve Mullin at (510) 768-3165 or e-mail smullin@cceb.org. Or Visit: <http://www.cceb.org/2015/11/take-action-stand-in-solidarity-with-syrian-refugees/>

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 29th:

Sunday Plate:	\$ 7,831.00
Last Year this week	\$ 7,168.00
Weekly Budgeted Goal:	\$ 8,815.00
Year-to-date this year:	\$388,758.00
Year-to-date last year:	\$384,001.00
November Budgeted Expenses	\$68,042.00

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:

Dennis Cande
Kathleen Denning
Julie Dillon
Estela Enriquez
Juanita Estrellas
Mary Franks
Byron Griffith
Elaine Jordan

Emy & Rico Maquiling
Richard Martin
Doree Rivera
Florence Sharp
Iwan Tunggal
James Van Wert
Yvonne Wheeler

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.

ELIZABETH GRIFFITH

Gospel for THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
(December 13th) **Luke 3:10-18**

The crowds asked John the Baptist, "What should we do?" He said to them in reply, "Whoever has two cloaks should share with the person who has none. And whoever has food should do likewise." Even tax collectors came to be baptized and they said to him, "Teacher, what should we do?" He answered them, "Stop collecting more than what is prescribed." Soldiers also asked him, "And what is it that we should do?" He told them, "Do not practice extortion, do not falsely accuse anyone, and be satisfied with your wages."

Now the people were filled with expectation, and all were asking in their hearts whether John might be the Christ. John answered them all, saying, "I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is coming. I am not worthy to loosen the thongs of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fan is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." Exhorting them in many other ways, he preached good news to the people.



**FESCO &
CASTRO VALLEY OUTREACH**
*Christmas Giving Trees
Tis The Season*

Beginning Thursday **November 19th**, 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 8 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 **Wednesday 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!**

THIS WEEK

Sunday, December 6th:

Coffee & Donuts After All Masses

Immaculate Conception Novena
30 Minutes before each Mass--Church
Children's Liturgy of the Word
9:00am--Mass

Religious Education Classes
10:30am--Stack Center

Youth Ministry
After 9:00am Mass--Gym

Spanish Mass
2:00pm--Church

Monday, December 7th:

Immaculate Conception Novena
3:00pm--Church

Tuesday, December 8th:

Bible Study
9:30am--Parish Office

Immaculate Conception Novena
3:00pm--Church

Thursday, December 10th:

Adoration & Confession
7:00pm--Church

Serenity Group
7:30pm--Stack Center

Saturday, December 12th:

Our Lady of Guadalupe Mananitas
6:00am--Church

LECTOR TRAINING

On **December 16th** at 7:00pm in Stack Center we will have a night of prayer and renewal in the Word of God. This night will provide a process of prayer to bring the scriptures to life in your heart. **All are welcome to attend this night of renewal.** After the experience of praying the Scripture with Lectio Divina those called to the Ministry of Lector will begin their application and orientation.

Mass for the Week

Please note: All weekday masses will be celebrated in the Church until further notice.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 7th (CHURCH)
St. Ambrose, Bishop, Doctor of the Church
 8:30am Mike de Guzman (D)

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8th (CHURCH)
THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY
 8:30am School Children's Liturgy
 7:00pm

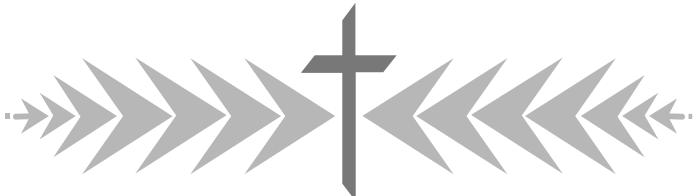
WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 9th (CHURCH)
St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin
 7:00am Helen Maes (D)

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 10th (CHURCH)
 7:00am Joe & Marie Silveria (D)

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 11th (CHURCH)
St. Damasus I, Pope
 7:00am Velasquez Family

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12th (CHURCH)
OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE
 7:00am Guadalupe Bustos (D)

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 13th (CHURCH)
 11:00am Mary Bronzini (D)



ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 19th

Our next Holy Hour with the Blessed Sacrament:
Saturday, December 19th
 Following the 8:30am Mass
 Private Devotions
 In the Church
 All are welcome



READINGS FOR THE WEEK:

December 7th through December 13th

Monday:	Isaiah 35:1-10; Luke 5:17-26
Tuesday:	Genesis 3:9-15, 20; Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12; Luke 1:26-38
Wednesday:	Isaiah 40:25-31; Matthew 11:28-30
Thursday:	Isaiah 41:13-20; Matthew 11:11-15
Friday:	Isaiah 48:17-19; Matthew 11:16-19
Saturday:	Zechariah 2:14-17; Luke 1:26-38
Sunday:	Zephaniah 3:14-18A; Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:10-18



COME JOIN IN THE FEAST!
Reserve your Crab Feed Tickets
Today! Save the Date:
Saturday, January 30, 2016

Yes! OLG is still planning a Community Crab Feed in spite of the delay to the opening of California's crab season! We will be receiving our crab from Canada or Washington state this year at an increased cost! However, the ticket price will be the **same as 2014: \$40.**

Price of the ticket includes: crab or chicken, salad, pasta, garlic bread, and another year of great entertainment by OLG's local bands Triple Play and Rust! **Instead of charging more for the event, we are asking groups of friends joining in this great evening of food and fun to bring appetizers and desserts to share at your table.** Beer, wine and limited mixed drinks will be available at a cost.

This is a GREAT community event that benefits CYO, the Church, and School. Don't delay, please reserve your tickets today!

Volunteers are needed for:
Running the kitchen
Set-up and clean-up

To reserve your ticket: Contact Jeanenne Deorsey (deorsej@gmail.com).

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This week we extend our gratitude to:

CLAYWORTH HEALTHCARE PHARMACY