



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In this Season of Advent, we have celebrated two beautiful feasts in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The first feast was the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, a Holy Day of Obligation, celebrated on December 8th. Mary was conceived in the womb of her mother, St. Ann, free from sin, making her the perfect dwelling place for Jesus to be conceived by the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit. Anticipating this Holy Day, Fr. Tom Czeck gave a presentation at Transfiguration Church concerning St. Maximilian Kolbe's love of Mary and the establishment of the Militia of the Immaculata. The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception was an excellent opportunity to make a Consecration to the Immaculate Virgin. For us, in the United States, there is another reason for us to rejoice in The Celebration of the Immaculate Conception because Mary is The Patroness of the United States. The second feast in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, which was celebrated on December 12th, The Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Fiesta en honor de Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe. Churches begin this celebration with an early morning celebration entitled "Mañanitas". The day is filled with song and dance and devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Our Lady of Guadalupe. Our Lady of Guadalupe is celebrated as The Patroness of the Americas.

The celebrations of The Solemnity of The Immaculate Conception and The Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe prepare the way for our celebration of the Third Sunday of Advent, known as Gaudete Sunday. The word, Gaudete, means rejoice. Traditionally, the Third Sunday of the Season of Advent marks the mid-point of the Season. The nearness of The Great Celebration of the Birth of Christ is reason for great joy. The readings at Mass for Gaudete Sunday are full of encouragement. They resound with joyful hope as we draw closer to The Birth of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Isaiah, Mary, and John the Baptist all bear joyful witness to what God has done and what God will do for His people. As we continue preparing for Christmas, we rejoice that Jesus is already in our hearts and lives. In the same way that

Isaiah, Mary, and John the Baptist bear joyful witness to the coming of Jesus, let us strive to do the same, let us all ask for the graces necessary to bear joyful witness in word and action to the coming of the Lord at Christmas. Let us pray that we all seek and find all the joy God offers to us this week and look forward to the fullness of joy when we celebrate The Birth of Jesus Christ at Christmas.

This year, Gaudete Sunday is only eight days before The Celebration of the Birth of Christ. So, mark your calendars. The Fourth Sunday of Advent is December 24th. Sunday Masses are as follows: Saturday Vigil at 5:00pm; Sunday Masses at 7:30am, 9:00am, 11:00am and 1:00pm in Spanish. Christmas Masses are as follows: Sunday, December 24th, Christmas Evening Vigil, at 5:00pm, Celebration of the Birth of the Lord at Night at 10:00pm; Christmas Day, December 25th at 7:30am, 9:00am, 11:00am and 1:00pm in Spanish.

Rejoice! Christmas is Coming!

-Fr. Raphael

REJOICE

Daughter Jerusalem

Be glad with all your heart

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Fourth Sunday of Advent (December 24th)

Luke 1:26-38

The angel Gabriel was sent from God to a town of Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a man named Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming to her, he said, "Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you." But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end." But Mary said to the angel, "How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?" And the angel said to her in reply, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. And behold, Elizabeth, your relative, has also conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month for her who was called barren; for nothing will be impossible for God." Mary said, "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." Then the angel departed from her.

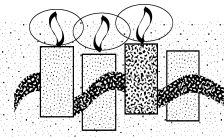
CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE***Vigil Masses—Sunday, December 24th****Carols will be sung 30 minutes before the evening Masses*

Family Mass at 5:00pm

Mass at Night at 10:00pm

Monday, December 25thMasses at 7:30am, 9:00am, 11:00am &
1:00pm (Spanish)**NEW YEAR'S MASS SCHEDULE*****Sunday, December 31st*****The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph**Masses at 7:30am, 9:00am, 11:00am &
1:00pm (Spanish)***Monday, January 1st*****The Solemnity of Mary, Holy Mother of God**

Mass at 8:15am

**UPDATED HOLIDAY OFFICE HOURS**

The Parish Office will be closed on Monday, **December 25th** and Tuesday, **December 26th**. We will re-open on Wednesday, **December 27th** at 8:30am.

Additionally, the office will be closed on Friday, **December 29th** and Monday, **January 1st**. We will re-open on Tuesday, **January 2nd** at 8:30am.

The entire Parish Staff wishes you all a Blessed Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year!

CHRISTMAS OFFERING

As we approach the Christmas Season and the end of the calendar year, we need to thank the Lord for all the good He has brought to our parish community and we need to thank the Lord for the many blessings our Church Community has received through your continued generosity, sharing your time, your talents and your treasure here at Our Lady of Grace Church for the support and growth of our Parish Family. Your donations to The St. Vincent de Paul Society and your Christmas gifts offered to families less fortunate than yourselves as part of the Giving Tree Program, make a difference in the lives of those who are most in need during this Christmas Season. Your generous support of Our Lady of Grace Church makes a tremendous difference in our Church as well.

**DECORATING FOR CHRISTMAS**

The committee is in need of help to get the church ready for Christmas. If you are available to help on Saturday, **December 23rd at 10:00am**, it would be most appreciated. The more hands, the quicker the work will be completed. Thanks in advance for your assistance!

CHRISTMAS FLOWERS

We invite 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 will be available after Christmas. Thank you for considering this thoughtful and helpful way to remember those you love.



Here at Our Lady of Grace Church, we have experienced a 19% increase in expenses over the last year. We were fortunate to have received two bequests that allowed us to take care of some deferred property maintenances allowing us to operate in the black, despite these increased expenses. With this being said, we are hoping to end this calendar year with a 2% increase in plate income over last year.

We ask that you be generous in your Christmas and End of Year Offerings to Our Lady of Grace Church. It would be wonderful if we would surpass our budgeted amount of \$26,000.00 for Christmas Contributions. Please know that we count on your Christmas and End of The Year contributions to help our Church meet our end of the year expenses and start 2024 in a positive position.

We are most grateful to you for your support throughout the year and especially for your generous contributions supporting Our Lady of Grace as we celebrate Christmas and come to the end of this calendar year accomplishing our Parish goals.

**OLG'S 75th ANNIVERSARY BOOK**

Just in time for Christmas—our 2nd order of Anniversary books are available for purchase in the Parish Office. Cost is \$14 per copy. Beautifully written by long time parishioner Mark Vaz, these keepsakes may be autographed upon request.

HOW YOU CAN HELP THOSE IN NEED THIS HOLIDAY SEASON



St. Vincent de Paul Warm Coat Drive

We are thankful for the generosity from those who have given so far. St. Vincent de Paul is collecting **coats, blankets and socks through December**. Our main need is men's coats in larger sizes; but we will accept women's and children's sizes too. We have collection barrels at the 2 main entrances to the church and in the Parish Office. **PLEASE DO NOT** leave other items of clothing. Thank you!

If you know someone in our community what could use our help, or if you have interested in knowing more about this ministry—please call our SVdP line at 510-581-2164 and someone will get back to you.

'Thank You' From St. Vincent de Paul

OLG's St. Vincent de Paul Conference would like to thank all of you for your incredible generosity over this past month. The amount of food we received over Thanksgiving was amazing and will keep our pantry stocked for quite a while. Our giving tree ornaments were scooped up quickly and we will be able to give our families a much better Christmas than any of them were expecting. We are continuing to give out jackets and blankets to those in need. As the weather began getting cold, we had several families that did not have the clothing needed to stay warm. We brought them upstairs where we keep all of our supplies and they were very excited to find jackets for themselves and their teenaged children. Again, we are blessed to be in this ministry and to belong to a parish that is so generous. *Wishing you a Merry Christmas and God's many blessings in the New Year.*



RELIGIOUS RETIREMENT COLLECTION It's Not Too Late To Give

Thank you to those who have given. This annual appeal helps retired sisters, brothers and religious order priests, who spent their lives in church ministries such as education, healthcare and social service, usually with little to no compensation. Consequently, a significant number currently have insufficient retirement funds, combined with escalating health-care costs. Envelopes are in the pews for your use. *Religious women and men thank you for each merciful action you take on behalf of others and pray for your spiritual peace.*

SUNDAY COLLECTION

Stewardship of treasure involves trust in God. You have to really believe in God's Providence and trust that if you give 10% of your income to the Church and charity, for example, God will help you live on the rest.

Offerings of for the Month of NOVEMBER:

Sunday Plate for the month:	\$ 35,342.00
Month Budgeted Goal:	\$ 38,000.00
Over/[Shortfall]	\$ [2,658.00]
Year-To-Date Over/[Shortfall]	\$ [969.00]

May God bless your continuing generosity.



Your Prayers Are Requested

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

Jaime Arce
Phyllis Barthman
Lois Belmessieri
Jot Brown
Raul Cepeda
Nancy French
Joan Gabrielli
Skeet Jennings
Grace Letteer
Brian Linney

Sheila McAlinden
Cec Penland
Julie Richardson
Diana Riley
Jenny Roberts
Al Rojas
Alyssia Tortora
Arthur Williams
Peggy Winkenbach

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

In Memorial

FIDEL GAITEN

VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE IN
THE MIDDLE EAST

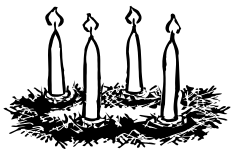
VICTIMS OF GUN VIOLENCE



CYO GIRLS BASKETBALL REGISTRATION



Girl's Basketball registration (open to grades 2nd-8th) is available online for OLG School Students and current Faith Formation Students ONLY. All other students residing in our Parish boundaries may register beginning December 30th. Fee for the 2024 program year is \$195. Space is limited! **Registration closes on January 10th.** To register, please visit: www.olgcvcyo.com. For more information, questions or if you would like to coach, please email: olgcvcyo@gmail.com.



ADVENT RECONCILIATION Last Opportunities

Reconciliation during Advent will follow our regular Reconciliation schedule with Adoration:

Thursdays: 6:00-7:00pm
Saturdays: 8:45-10:00am

OUR LADY OF GRACE CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Did You Know??

- The school observed the Feast of St. Nicholas, Bishop of Myra on December 6th by having the students leave a shoe outside of their classrooms. St. Nick always finds the time to leave a treat.
- The entire school traveled to the Paramount Theater in Oakland on December 15th to attend the last dress rehearsal of *The Nutcracker*. In addition to hearing and seeing the magical ballet, students learned all that is involved in putting together a world-class production.
- School Registration is open on our website: www.olgschool.org. Please encourage family and friends to "check us out"!

Our "Did You Know" column will be taking a Christmas Break and will return on January 7th. Happy Christmas and many blessings for 2024!



CYO ATHLETICS CRAB FEED February 3rd, 2024

Join us as we raise funds for OLG's CYO Athletics. Festivities include: Music, Silent Auction and No-Host Bar. Menu includes: Crab or Chicken, Pasta, Salad and Bread. Get your tickets online by visiting: <https://tinyurl.com/OLG-CYO>. Cost is \$85 per online purchase. Tickets also available at the Parish Office. There are also limited tables for 10 for \$800 and for 12 for \$950. KidKare will be available for \$30 per child (space is limited). See you there!

If you are interested in joining the Crab Feed Committee and volunteering your time and talents, please email Joe Perry at CrabFeed@olgschool.org

MAXIMILIAN KOLBE QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"I beg you to trust without limits in the Immaculata and to strive toward the goal with courage and calm even through thorns."

THIS WEEK

Sunday, December 17th:

Third Sunday of Advent

Advent Lessons & Carols
5:00pm—Church

Monday, December 18th:

Women's Cursillo Meeting
6:00pm—Stack Center, OLG Room

Tuesday, December 19th:

Men's Cursillo Meeting
6:00pm—Stack Center, OLG Room

Men's Faith Share
7:00pm—Stack Center, Room 7

Wednesday, December 20th:

Columbette's Meeting
6:30pm—Stack Center, OLG Room

RCIA
7:00pm—Parish Office

Thursday, December 21st:

AA Serenity Group
7:30pm—Augustine Center

Adoration & Reconciliation
6:00pm—Church

Saturday, December 23rd:

Adoration & Reconciliation
8:45am—Church

Christmas Decorating
10:00am—Church

Sunday, December 24th:

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Christmas Eve Vigil Masses
5:00pm & 10:00pm—Church

BISHOP'S MINISTRIES APPEAL

We are grateful to all those who have made a pledge or outright donation to the 2023 Bishop's Ministries Appeal. Your generosity has enabled Our Lady of Grace to exceed our appeal goal. As a reminder, all funds exceeding our goal will be returned to Our Lady of Grace for our needs. *If you have made your pledge to the 2023 Appeal, please complete your donation by **December 31st**.* May God Bless your continuing generosity.



I AM WITH YOU ALWAYS
BISHOP'S MINISTRIES APPEAL 2023

Mass for the Intentions Week

SUNDAY, December 17th**THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

7:30am Jesusa Perdido – D
 9:00am OLG Community
 11:00am Jennifer Guerrero – L
 1:00pm Rosa Martinez Reyes – D

MONDAY, December 18th

8:15am Gina Castillo – L

TUESDAY, December 19th

8:15am Anthony Shomon – L

WEDNESDAY, December 20th

8:15am Louis Rodrigues – D

THURSDAY, December 21st

St. Peter Canisius, Priest & Doctor of the Church

8:15am Fred & Celia Dorado

FRIDAY, December 22nd

8:15am Becky Frank – D

SATURDAY, December 23rd

St. John of Kanty, Priest

8:15am Antonio S. Barroso, Sr. – D

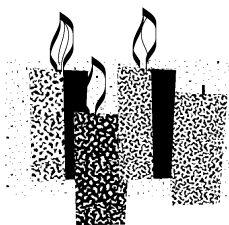
5:00pm Sean Hinkson – L

SUNDAY, December 24th**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**

7:30am OLG Community
 9:00am Marv & Ruth Picha – D
 11:00am Leona Albano – D
 1:00pm No Intention

Christmas Eve Masses

5:00pm Norma Wardle – D
 10:00pm No Intention



Rejoice
Your God is near!

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HOLIDAY BULLETIN DEADLINES

Please have items for the Bulletin to the Parish Office no later than the deadlines shown below:

December 31st Bulletin: **Due December 18th**

January 7th Bulletin: **Due December 20th**

READINGS FOR THE WEEK:**December 18th through December 24th**

Monday: Jeremiah 23:5-8; Matthew 1:18-25
 Tuesday: Judges 13:2-7, 24-25; Luke 1:5-25
 Wednesday: Isaiah 7:10-14; Luke 1:26-38
 Thursday: Song of Songs 2:8-14; Luke 1:39-45
 Friday: 1 Samuel 1:24-28; Luke 1:46-56
 Saturday: Malachi 3:1-4, 23-24; Luke 1:57-66
 Sunday: 2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8-12, 14, 16;
 Romans 16:25-27; Luke 1:26-38

ATTENTION EUCHARISTIC MINISTERS

Please refer to the email sent December 6th regarding Communion Distribution Procedure. This update includes an attachment approved by Fr. Raphael regarding the distribution of the Blessed Sacrament.

LITURGICAL MINISTRIES

As members of the Body of Christ, we are called to actively participate in the Liturgy through presence, ritual action, prayer, silence and song. Participating in a liturgical ministry is an excellent opportunity to fulfill your baptismal call of service to one another. Our liturgies should utilize the talents and gifts that God has given this community to the fullest extent. Please consider offering your time as a Lector, Usher, Music Ministry, Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion. Please contact Bonnie Ricketts for more information: missbonnie@comcast.net

**ROSARY BEFORE MASS**

Come join in prayer of the Rosary 30 minutes before each of the weekend liturgies. Pray for our Parish!

RELEVANT RADIO - 1260 AM

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**THANK THEM WITH YOUR SUPPORT**

Please support our advertisers who make our weekly bulletin possible and so generously support our Parish. We are grateful to them! This week we extend our gratitude to:

**ST. JUDE CHILDREN'S
RESEARCH HOSPITAL**