

Lent: A Sense of the Season

The word Lent means springtime. This word comes from the same root as *lengthen*. Daytime lengthens during Lent. The northern hemisphere turns toward the sun, the source of life, and winter turns into spring. In Hebrew, the word for *repentance* is the same as the word that means *to turn*, like the turning of the earth to the sun, like the turning of the soil before planting.

“Even now, says the Lord, turn to me.” (Joel 2:12) The word *sin* means separation. We are called to turn from our separate selves, from our sin, to come together in community. Self-denial is the way we express our repentance. In the lengthening brightness from Ash Wednesday until Holy Thursday afternoon, our holy Lent, we turn to God as our source of life.

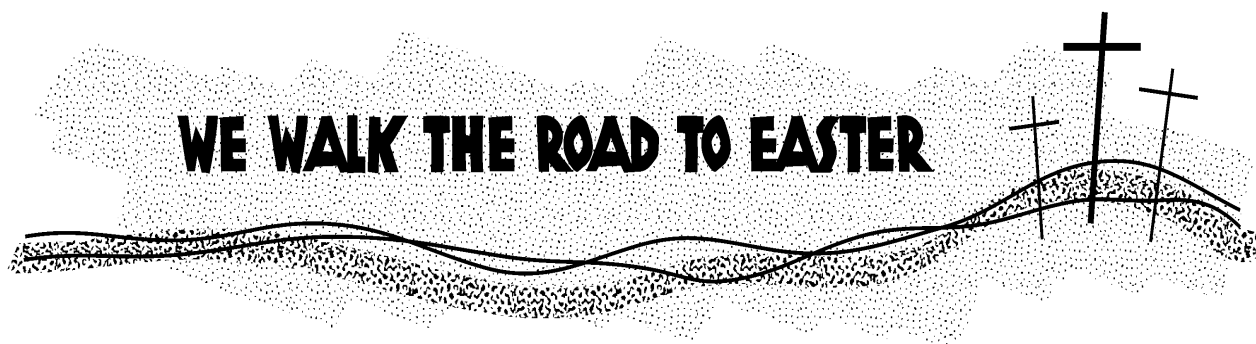
Self-denial is threefold, advises Matthew’s gospel. We pray: “Go to your room, close your door, and pray to your Father in private.” We fast: “No one must see you are fasting but your Father.” We give alms: “Keep your deeds of mercy secret, and your Father who sees in secret will repay you.” Through the Lenten exercise of prayer, fasting and almsgiving, we spring clean our lives, sharpen our senses, put tomorrow in its place and treasure the day at hand.

Why are there forty days in Lent? It took forty days for sinfulness to drown in the flood before a new creation could inherit the earth. It took forty years for the generation of slaves to die before the freeborn could enter the promised land. For forty days, Moses and Elijah and Jesus fasted and prayed to prepare themselves for a life’s work.

At the beginning of Lent, the bishop calls out the names of the catechumens who seek to be baptized at Easter. Their names are written in the book of the elect, the chosen. God has chosen them, and they have chosen to turn to God. Lent is the forty days before the baptism of the catechumens. The already baptized can share the excitement and the struggles of the elect and rediscover the meaning of baptism in their own lives. During the forty days, both catechumens and the faithful journey together to the holy font.

We keep Lent together. We put aside our business-as-usual to support each other in prayer, fasting and almsgiving. We turn to God to enlighten us and purify us throughout the lengthening brightness of our holy season of Lent.

“For now is the acceptable time! Now is the day of salvation!”



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Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord (March 24th)

Mark 14:1-15:47

Due to the length of the Gospel, it could not be printed. We thank you for your understanding.

**OPERATING INCOME AND EXPENSES YTD
AS OF DECEMBER 31st, 2023**

Income	2023 Actual	2023 Budget
Plate Collection/Unrestricted	569,360	544,010
Plate Collection/Restricted	4,992	4,700
Donations Unrestricted	96,653	16,500
Donations Restricted	22,811	26,000
Fundraising Restricted/Scrip	18,569.41	40,000
Edu. Programs/Ministries	13,414	16,100
Interest Income	10,364	10,434
Other Operating Income	41,378	34,400
Total Operating Income	\$777,541	\$692,144
Expenses		
Salary Expense/Benefits	289,492	320,864
Administration	141,330	141,400
Parish Property	124,835	50,027
Priest/Rectory Living	135,640	139,613
Liturgy/Music	12,579	13,200
Faith Formation	7,363	4,750
Adult Ed/Evangelization	3,197	2,175
Fellowship/Other Ministries	3,831	3,000
Total Operating Expenses	718,267	675,029
NET INCOME	59,274	17,115

This is an overview of the financial well being of Our Lady of Grace Parish. To all who have made contributions of OLG throughout this year, thank you very much indeed for your generosity and support. Your continued support signifies the love of God’s grace and the stewardship we share as a parish community.


Overall it was an excellent financial year. We finished the year with a strong 4th quarter revenue, punctuated by a record Christmas Collection and End of Year Giving. Sunday collections, the largest component of Unrestricted Plate, increased to 6.5%. Your continued support for this very important revenue source is much needed and greatly appreciated. Total operating revenue exceeded last year by 12% or \$85,397. As a result, we were able to increase staff positions in our Whole Family Program, maintain and improve our aging facilities—and still generate a surplus going into 2024. We look forward to building on our progress to date and need your support for the continued growth and success of Our Lady of Grace faith community.

This past year we have benefitted from the generosity of parishioners who have remembered us in their wills. This is reflected in the \$96,653 in Donations Unrestricted income. We received \$82,620.10 that allowed us to spend money on some deferred property maintenance that is reflected in the \$124,835 in Parish Property expense.

Maintaining a parish requires efforts on the part of many. Many serve as catechists or at the Sunday Masses while others reach out to the homebound and marginalized to keep the bonds of our community strong. Many volunteers contribute their time and energy to the needs of the parish. Our parish is dedicated to preserving all that we are while being hopeful of the bright future ahead.




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**OLG SCHOOL’S FABULOUS
50’S DANCE PARTY & AUCTION**
Saturday, March 23rd
5:30-8:00pm
Stack Center

All are invited for an amazing night of Auction, Hula Hoop and Limbo Contests, Tasty Diner Bites, Photo Booth and Dancing!

For a sneak preview of the auction items and to place your bids, scan this QR code. **Bidding has begun and closes at 6:30pm on March 23rd!**



Purchase your tickets today for \$35 per adult and \$25 per student by scanning this QR code.



Tickets will also be sold at the door for \$40 each.

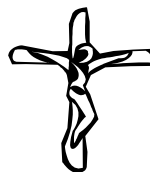
WEDNESDAY LENTEN MASS & SOUP MEAL



Join us for our Lenten Masses held on Wednesday evenings at 6:00pm, followed by a simple meal of soup and bread in Stack Center. It will be a time for fellowship and families coming together. Our next Lenten Soup Meal is on **March 20th**. *We thank our OLG School Community for their hospitality.* Financial donations will also be accepted for CRS Rice Bowl.

LENTEN RECONCILIATION

Reconciliation and Adoration is available every Thursday at 6:00pm and Saturday at 9:00am, after the 8:15am Mass.



**STATIONS OF THE CROSS
English & Spanish**

Stations of the Cross, led by our school students is offered at Our Lady of Grace on March 22nd at 11:00am. Evening Stations in English begins at 6:00pm and in Spanish at 6:30pm. *On Good Friday, March 29th, join us for Stations in English at Noon and in Spanish at 6:00pm.*

Let the first among you
who is without sin
cast the first stone

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**CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES
BISHOP'S OVERSEAS APPEAL**

If you missed this collection, it's not too late to give! Thank you for your generous support of The Catholic Relief Services Collection and for **revealing Christ's love** to those who are poor and marginalized around the world. Please make your check out to "Catholic Charities". Envelopes are in the pews for your use. *You may also give online by visiting: www.usccb.org/nationalcollections*



**PALM SUNDAY FELLOWSHIP &
HOT CROSS BUNS
March 24th**

Join us on Palm Sunday after the 9:00am, 11:00am and 1:00pm Masses in the Gathering Area. We will enjoy fellowship and delicious Hot Cross Buns.

HELP US DECORATE FOR EASTER

We will be readying the church for our Easter Services beginning at **9:00am on Saturday, March 30th**. If you are available to help place flowers, dust and spruce up the church, we would be most appreciative. We look forward to seeing you!

FORMED 40 DAYS OF LENT WITH
FORMED.ORG

Lent and New Life in Christ: The Gift of Grace & Almsgiving

<https://watch.formed.org/videos/lent-and-new-life-in-christ-the-gift-of-grace-almgiving>

Join Dr. Michael Barber as he discusses the transformative power of grace and almsgiving.

Laugh & Grow Bible for Kids

<https://watch.formed.org/lent/videos/easter-special-laugh-and-grow-bible-for-kids>

This gentle retelling—from Jesus' miracles to the greatest miracle of all—His resurrection, will help kids understand why Jesus came to earth to be our Savior and our friend.

Be sure to check out other Lenten selections on our Parish website at www.olgcv.org. Click on "Formed" on the navigation bar.

Not a member yet? Register for free by visiting www.olgcv.formed.org and type in "Our Lady of Grace, Castro Valley, CA" to become a member.

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 FEBRUARY:

Sunday Plate for the month:	\$ 38,099.00
Month Budgeted Goal:	\$ 49,608.00
Over/[Shortfall]	\$ [11,509.00]
Year-To-Date Over/[Shortfall]	\$ [16,975.00]

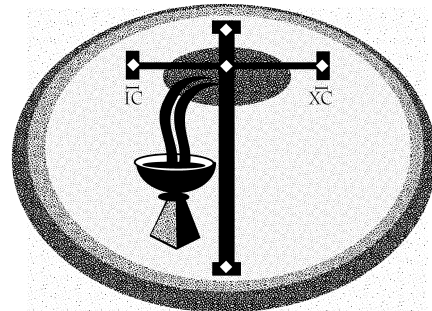
May God bless your continuing generosity.



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 | Julie Richardson |
| Lois Belmessieri | Diana Riley |
| Jot Brown | Jenny Roberts |
| Raul Cepeda | Al Rojas |
| Nancy French | Helen Star |
| Joan Gabrielli | Alyssia Tortora |
| Brian Linney | James Van Wert |
| Sheila McAlinden | Arthur Williams |
| Sheryl Michaud | Peggy Winkenbach |
| Mike Miraglia | |



Forgetting what lies behind but straining forward to what lies ahead, I continue my pursuit toward the goal, the prize of GOD's upward calling in CHRIST JESUS.

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

In Memorial

JUDITH BRAGA

FR. BOB GAVOTTO, O.S.A.

JIM MULVANEY

**VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE IN
THE MIDDLE EAST**

VICTIMS OF GUN VIOLENCE



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**EASTER MEMORIAL FLOWERS
OUR LADY OF GRACE TRADITION**

Once again, this year we are inviting you to remember family members and friends through a Flower Offering which will help us to purchase the 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 Easter Flower Offering envelopes available in the pews. A list of names of all who are remembered will be available after Easter.

FAITH FORMATION CLASSES

First Communion-Year 2

Next Class: March 17th
10:15am—Stack Center

Whole Family-Year 1

Next Class: March 24th
10:15am—Stack Center

Confirmation

Next Class: March 24th
12:15pm—Stack Center

Whole Family Program

Next Class: April 7th
10:15am—Augustine Center



COLUMBIETTES

Attention Ladies! Are you interested in becoming active in our parish? Come see what the Columbiettes are all about. This week, we will meet on **March 21st**, 6:30-7:30pm in Stack Center, OLG Room. For additional information, please visit:

<https://www.californiacolumbiettes.com>

MILITIA IMMACULATA MEETINGS

Come join us as members of the Militia Immaculata (MI) on the 1st Saturday of each month at 10:00am in Stack Center, OLG Room. Our next meeting will be on **April 6th**.



MAXIMILIAN KOLBE QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“It is worth desiring solely the will of God, even if He wants our name to be hoisted on a pole and brought to all the cities and streets of the earth. In fact, the will of God is really the essence of holiness, love, divinization.”

THIS WEEK

Sunday, March 17th:

The Fifth Sunday of Lent

Coffee & Donuts
After the 9:00am Mass—Gathering Area

Girl Scout Cookie Sales
After the 9:00am, 11:00am & 1:00pm Masses
Gathering Area

1st Communion Class -Year 2
10:15am—Stack Center

Tuesday, March 19th:

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

Women’s Lenten Bible Study
7:00pm—Stack Center

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

Wednesday, March 20th:

Lenten Mass
6:00pm Mass—Church

Lenten Soup Meal
After the 6:00pm Mass—Stack Center

RCIA
7:00pm—Parish Office

Thursday, March 21st:

Adoration & Reconciliation
6:00pm—Church

Columbiettes’ Meeting
6:30pm—Stack Center, OLG Room

AA Serenity Group
7:30pm—Augustine Center

Friday, March 22nd:

Stations of the Cross
11:00am (School), 6:00pm (English)
& 6:30pm (Spanish)—Church

Saturday, March 23rd:

Adoration & Reconciliation
8:45am—Church

Sunday, March 24th:

Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord

Hot Cross Buns
After the 9:00am, 11:00am & 1:00pm Masses
Gathering Area

1st Communion Class -Year 1
10:15am—Stack Center

Mass Intentions for the Week

SUNDAY, March 17th

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

7:30am Jeanette Willison – L

9:00am Antonio O. Chocha – D

11:00am OLG Community

1:00pm Jose Duarte – D

MONDAY, March 18th

St. Cyril of Jerusalem, Bishop & Doctor of the Church

8:15am Mario Tejada – D

TUESDAY, March 19th

ST. JOSEPH, SPOUSE OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

8:15am Jose & Julia Sousa – D

WEDNESDAY, March 20th

8:15am Patricia Silveri – L

THURSDAY, March 21st

8:15am Shari McAsey – L

FRIDAY, March 22nd

8:15am Maria Luisa Rivera – D

SATURDAY, March 23rd

St. Turibius of Mogrovejo, Bishop

8:15am Jose, Rose Maria & Filomena Freitas – D

5:00pm Shirley Maderios – D

SUNDAY, March 24th

PALM SUNDAY OF THE PASSION OF THE LORD

7:30am OLG Community

9:00am Frank Lang – D

11:00am Ronald & Elizabeth Flormata

1:00pm Brenda Velez – L

READINGS FOR THE WEEK:

March 18th through March 24th

Monday: Daniel 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62;
John 8:1-11

Tuesday: 2 Samuel 7:4-5, 12-14,16;
Romans 4:13, 16-18, 22;
Matthew 1:16,18-21,24

Wednesday: Daniel 3:14-20, 91-92, 95;
John 8:31-42

Thursday: Genesis 17:3-9; John 8:51-59

Friday: Jeremiah 20:10-13; John 10:31-42

Saturday: Ezekiel 37:21-28; John 11:45-56

Sunday: Isaiah 50:4-7; Philippians 2:6-11;
Mark 14:1-15:47



*Be doers of the Word
and not hearers only*

**UNBOUND—FREEDOM IN CHRIST
CONFERENCE**

Respond to the good news of the gospel and apply truth to your life. Take hold of the freedom Christ won for you! All are invited on **April 20th (9:00am-4:30pm)** to participate in this one-day conference held at St. Raymond’s Church in Dublin at 11555 Shannon Avenue. Early bird registration is \$35 and includes lunch.

Scan the QR code for early bird registration by April 10th.



After April 10th, registration is \$45.

RELEVANT RADIO - 1260 AM

Relevant Radio brings you the best in Catholic Radio 24/7! Playing on 1260AM and dedicated to sharing the heart of the Catholic Faith and changing lives.



**31st ANNUAL PASSION PLAY
Good Shepard Church in Pittsburg**

Experience the Passion of Our Lord with the youth of Good Shepard Parish! Since 1993, hundreds of parish youth and young adults have dedicated themselves to making this presentation a meaningful and moving experience for all who come to witness it. Performance dates are as follows:

March 17th & 23rd at 7:00pm

March 24th at 5:00pm

March 27th at 6:00pm

March 29th at 7:30pm

Good Shepard Parish
3200 Harbor Street, Pittsburg

PAX CHRISTI QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.”

-St. Mother Teresa of Calcutta, 1979

To join our work with Pax Christi, please contact the Parish Office at 510-537-0806.

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:

THE LAW OFFICE OF EDUARDO ROBLES