

# Church of the Ascension

[ascensionsaratoga.org](http://ascensionsaratoga.org) | 408-725-3939

Masses: (Sat) 5p; (Sun) 7a, 9a, 11a, 5p  
(Mon-Fri) 8a; (Sat) 9a

Confessions: (Sat) 4p - 4:45p



December 8, 2024

## Second Sunday of Advent

Bar 5:1-9 | Phil 1:4-6, 8-11 | Lk 3:1-6

Written by  
THE  
FAITHFUL  
DISCIPLE

### **GROW AS A DISCIPLE** | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

On this second Sunday of Advent, when the hustle and bustle of the season is already upon us, I find Paul's words in his Letter to the Philippians very comforting. He says he is confident "that the one who began a good work in [us] will continue to complete it until the day of Christ Jesus." Jesus will continue to be our Advocate and our Rock until the day he comes again. Yes, these are comforting words, indeed. But we know that being a disciple of Christ requires our cooperation and our daily assent to doing God's will. How do we know God's will for us? In his letter, Paul goes on to pray that our love may continue to increase in knowledge and perception "to discern what is of value." In other words, if we are going to be able to choose what is good, we must be able to recognize it and then focus on it.

### **GO EVANGELIZE**

#### **PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT**

This is where "the voice of one crying out in the wilderness" speaks to us during this season in which we prepare for Christ's coming. It is a season of hope and anticipation, but it also must be a season of preparation. In today's Gospel, the proclamation of John the Baptist takes center stage; he proclaims a "baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" and says to "prepare the way of the Lord." These words do not suggest passivity - waiting patiently for the Lord to come. They suggest action: Repent. Prepare. Make straight his paths. Today let us consider how we can prepare for the Lord's coming in our own lives. God has made us *good*, and he wants to bring that goodness to completion. As we continue in this Advent season, let us stay focused on recognizing and choosing "what is of value" in our lives so that we are able to truly rejoice that the Lord draws near.

### **SING**

*Dear Savior, haste*

*Come, come to earth*

*Dispel the night and show your face*

*And bid us hail the dawn of grace*

## A Guide to Keep Us Safe

If you've ever traveled to previously unknown places, you appreciate the importance of having a reliable guide. A good guide speaks the language, knows the lay of the land, and anticipates obstacles along the way. John the Baptist is such a guide for our Advent journey. He cautions us to prepare the way for deeper access to the divine mystery we approach in this season. John tells us that the right spirit for this encounter is repentance: a turning around, a fresh effort. Some of us may need to be forgiven. Others have some forgiving to do. Heed this guidance! -*Preparethetheword.com*

## Advent - Get off pedestal of superiority

The season of Advent is a moment of grace to help us stop being presumptuous and pretending to be self-sufficient... There is only one way to begin a new life: "the way of humility -- to be purified from the sense of superiority, from formalism and hypocrisy," Pope Francis said. "Each of us needs to confess our own sins, our own failings, our own hypocrisy," the pope said. "It requires getting off the pedestal and being immersed in the water of repentance."

## Celebrate Immaculate Conception

The Mass celebrating the Immaculate Conception this year will be on **Monday, Dec. 9, at 8:00am**, as the feast falls on Sunday. While Bishop Cantú has granted a dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass this year, you are encouraged to come and celebrate Mass.

## Advent Reconciliation Service

**Dec. 14, Saturday, from 9:45 am to 10:45 am**

*"When the door starts closing a bit because of our weakness and sins, confession reopens it."* - Pope Francis

## Nativity Play by Children

Bring costumes if you have them.

**Dec. 14 & 21** (10am-11am): *Rehearsals*

**Dec. 24** (5pm Family Mass): *Nativity Play*

**To sign up:** Visit [ascensionsaratoga.org](http://ascensionsaratoga.org).

## Collection for Retired Religious - Dec. 8

Your support for this fund will benefit more than 20,000 retired religious who dedicated their lives to service.

## WEEKLY OFFERING - DEC. 1

-\$12,895 (basket: \$4,765; online: \$929; longer-interval donations: \$7,201). Goal: \$6,500.

-YTD: \$136,751. Budget: \$143,000.

-\$681 (Thanksgiving Day).

-\$4,000 (Terrace Project).

Thank you for your generosity.

## MASS INTENTIONS

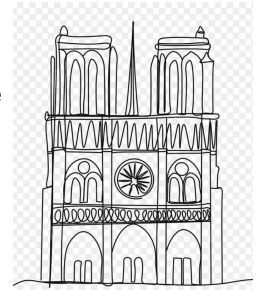
Dec 07	Sat	05 pm	Alberto Pineda +
Dec 08	Sun	07 am	Priscilla Jones +
		09 am	Allan Victor De La Vega +
		11 am	Francisco Moreno +
		05 pm	Diane Borromeo (L)
Dec 09	Mon	08 am	(Immaculate Conception)
Dec 10	Tue	08 am	Natalie McKeever (L)
Dec 11	Wed	08 am	Mark Anthony Baylon +
Dec 12	Thu	08 am	Karen Kubillus (L)
Dec 13	Fri	08 am	Fr. Rey Sarmiento (L)
Dec 14	Sat	08 am	The Gerrard Family

## Notre-Dame de Paris:

### Symbol of Renewal and Hope

Five years after the Basilica of Notre-Dame de Paris was damaged by a fire, on Apr. 15, 2019, the magnificent cathedral was set to be officially reopened on Dec. 7-8, 2024. It's a symbol of renewal and hope, resonating with this Sunday's readings about restoration (Baruch 5:1-9), growth and completion (Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11), and transformation (Luke 3:1-6).

Archbishop Laurent Ulrich of Paris invited the faithful, nearly 170 bishops from France and around the world, as well as a priest from each of the 106 parishes of the Archdiocese of Paris, and a priest from each of the seven oriental Catholic churches to the Reopening Service on Dec. 7 and Reopening Mass on Dec. 8. The Dec. 7 service includes the opening of the doors, the "awakening of the organ," the blessing of a new ambo and the consecration of a new altar.



## Damaged Outdoor Statue

The statue of the Ascending Christ near our church was damaged during the last storm. It's temporarily removed for repair and reconditioning. It's our own symbol of hope!

## Another Photo Session for Jubilee Book

If you missed it in October, there is another chance to have your photo taken: **Sunday, Dec. 8 (12:30pm - 4pm) in the Classrooms. Walk-in welcome.**

Only \$15 per individual photo, \$25 per photo with 2 persons or more. You will receive 5"x7" prints on-site, and a Jubilee Book for \$10 (50% discount) when it's finished.

## Ads/Messages in Jubilee Book

Consider sponsoring our Parish Jubilee Book with:

- Ads for your *business* (or someone else's)
- Messages in *honor* of those who mark significant events or in *memory* of a loved one.
- *Congratulations* to Ascension from your family/group.

### Sponsorship levels:

Full Page \$250 | 1/2 Page \$150

1/4 Page \$100 | Business Card \$50

**Contact** Melissa at [franmel1123@yahoo.com](mailto:franmel1123@yahoo.com), or 408-823-9079.



## Content for Parish 60th Jubilee Book

Our 60th Jubilee Book is in progress. We are collecting content - pictures, artifacts, and stories - for the book.

- Pictures and artifacts: If you have photos or materials related to Ascension (historic events, activities, buildings, etc.), please send them to the parish office or email to [acsp95070@gmail.com](mailto:acsp95070@gmail.com) (with a brief caption, your name, and your phone number).

- In your own words: Please write a few words to express what you like about our Ascension Parish, either (1) on the newsprint paper in church, or (2) on "Ascension Jubilee Book" on the website [ascensionsaratoga.org](http://ascensionsaratoga.org). The comments that best define our community will be part of our 60th Jubilee Book. Thank you.