

Church of the Ascension

ascensionsaratoga.org | 408-725-3939

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

Confessions: (Sat) 4p – 4:45p

December 14, 2025

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Third Sunday of Advent

Is 35:1-6a, 10 | Jas 5:7-10 | Mt 11:2-11

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

One morning, I woke up feeling exhausted after a fitful night of sleep. I was achy and generally under the weather. Despite this, I made a to-do list because the day's work still needed to be accomplished. I was determined to not let this sickness interrupt my productivity, even though I *knew* I needed to rest. It occurred to me, then, that rest — and dependence on others and God — is sacred also. In today's psalm, we hear of the many ways the Lord provides: The *Lord* gives, the *Lord* raises, the *Lord* loves, the *Lord* protects, the *Lord* saves. We cannot accomplish our own salvation, but we can rest in the promise the Lord provides, and we can hope in the salvation offered in Christ. As we wait in joyful anticipation for the coming of Jesus at Christmas, let us find time to rest in his Word and his presence, trusting that our salvation does not depend on us and has already come to fruition in Christ.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

As we saw in our psalm, God is the one who takes initiative, who provides for our salvation. In our work to share the faith with others, sometimes our task is simply to help others become aware of the ways God is providing for them by pointing out the signs of his action in their lives. When the disciples of John came to Jesus asking if he was “the one who is to come” or whether they should “look for another,” Jesus reminds them of the evidence all around them: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, and the dead are raised. As we help others to see God's work in their lives, we are also leading them to greater faith and trust in him.

REST

We are more able to see the signs of God's providence in our lives when we take time to reflect. Make time to rest in God's presence this week. This could mean stopping into a chapel for a couple minutes of quiet prayer, reflecting on Scripture using *Lectio Divina*, or reading the story of Christ's nativity in the Gospel. These simple practices will prepare our hearts to recognize Christ's presence and goodness at each moment of our lives.



Examine the Evidence

When John the Baptist sends his disciples to Jesus to ask if he is the Messiah, Jesus doesn't give them a direct answer but suggests they look at what they see and evaluate for themselves: The blind see, the lame walk, the deaf hear, and the dead are raised. If someone as close to Jesus as John had to ask, we can forgive ourselves if at times we wonder about Jesus' saving power in our own lives. Like the disciples of John, we're challenged to figure out for ourselves by examining the evidence—in scripture, in prayer, and in our lives and the lives of loved ones. Jesus doesn't force himself on us; he trusts we have the smarts to see for ourselves.

-Takefiveforfaith.com

Advent Joyful Bites!

Dec. 14 @ 10am

On this Gaudete (Rejoice) Sunday of Advent, in joyous anticipation of the Nativity of our Savior, we invite you to the

Advent Joyful Bites, a baked goods drive, during the Coffee & Donuts time after the 9am Mass.

Donations for homemade cakes, cookies, and other pastries in this drive will be for our church **Flower/Environment fund**.

Come to enjoy fellowship over coffee and support our parish through this baked goods drive.



Year-End Donations

Thank you for being a part of our Church of the Ascension and for your support. Let's finish the year strong and work together for a blessed new one. Consider giving a year-end gift to our parish.

WEEKLY OFFERING - Dec. 7

-Total: **\$9,746** (\$7,299, including a \$2,000 annual donation + online: \$2,447). Goal: \$6,800.

-YTD Sunday: \$140,542. Budget: \$156,400.

-Thanksgiving Mass: \$782.

-Advent Gathering Breakfast: \$55.25.

Thank you for your generosity.

MASS INTENTIONS

Dec 13	Sat	05 pm	Marie Firato & Family
Dec 14	Sun	07 am	Dorothy Miller +
		09 am	Carlos Garner +
		11 am	Walter Dunajski +
		05 pm	Robert Burke +
Dec 15	Mon	08 am	Carmela Honor +
Dec 16	Tue	08 am	Marilyn Martin (L)
Dec 17	Wed	08 am	The Brazzano Family
Dec 19	Fri	08 am	Marie Firato (L)
Dec 20	Sat	09 am	Elizabeth Maldero +

US Bishop's Special Message

At their plenary assembly in Baltimore in November, the US Conference of Catholic Bishops issued a special message on immigration, expressing deep concern over the treatment of immigrants and calling for humane reform, emphasizing dignity, solidarity, and compassion, a rare urgent declaration for the bishops.

They highlighted suffering in detention centers, family separations, and dehumanizing rhetoric, assuring immigrants they are not alone and urging national leaders for a just system, aligning with Catholic teaching on human dignity. The message was endorsed by 97% of the bishops who attended the assembly.

Scan the QR code for the special message and also statements from several dioceses, including our Diocese of San Jose.



Seasons of Hope for Those Who Grieve

The winter session of Seasons of Hope begins on Feb 4 and will continue on Feb 11, 18, 25, Mar 4, and 11 (Wednesdays from 1p - 2:30p) at Sacred Heart Parish in Saratoga.

Designed for those who have lost a loved one, Seasons of Hope provides the opportunity for confidential conversation, prayer, reflection and meditation. These meetings are free and open to all.

Location: Sacred Heart Parish Center, Transfiguration Rm, 13716 Saratoga Ave. Contact Carolyn at 408-867-3634, or email her at c.orasin@sacredheartsaratoga.org. Or call Nancy at 408-209-6118.

"You will grieve, but your grief will become joy."

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

Christmas Eve:

5:00 pm

8:00 pm

Christmas Day:

7:00 am

9:00 am

11:00 am

(no 5:00 pm)



Our Giving Tree

-**Catholic Charities** relies on your generosity to provide support for families and individuals on their journeys to self-sufficiency. Gift cards make the holidays brighter for Catholic Charities clients.

-The **Layette Program** welcomes infant clothing and other needed items and supplies. This program has been in existence for 70 years in our Diocese! (The Help One Child program is not seeking gifts this season). **Please stop by the Giving Tree** and consider giving a gift. Thank you.