



December 10, 2023

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

Second Sunday of Advent

Is 40:1-5, 9-11 | 2 Pt 3:8-14 | Mk 1:1-8

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

Can you hear it? The voice crying out in the desert? While John the Baptist was the one literally proclaiming, from the desert, the coming of the Lord, we should listen for echoes of his message today. John foretold that Jesus – the Father’s Incarnate Son – was on his way to redeem the world. Through Jesus’ passion and death, the gates of heaven were flung open so all who believe in him would have eternal life. This is the Good News he proclaimed then, and the Church proclaims today: *Christ has come! Christ has died, Christ is risen, and Christ will come again.* This is what we prepare for in Advent – to celebrate, on Christmas day, Christ’s coming into the world, and that he will one day return in glory. The Lord gives comfort to his people in his words, and in his presence to us in the Eucharist: “According to his promise we await new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.” So, trust in the Lord, remain vigilant, and take heed of the voices that remind us to “prepare the way of the Lord.”

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Each year, we are given the gift of Advent. It is a season that invites us to slow down, reflect on the gift of Jesus and prepare to celebrate the Nativity of the Lord. Ironically, though, it happens at one of the most frenzied times of the year as we rush to keep up with cookie baking, tree decorating and merry-making. Advent is short – it includes four Sundays but can be three to four weeks long depending on the weekday upon which Christmas falls – and it sometimes doesn’t seem long enough to truly prepare our hearts. This year Advent is three weeks and a day – so we are close to reaching the midway point, which is a good time to ask ourselves: How tuned in are we to John the Baptist’s message? If we feel like we’re being carried along in a wave of consumerism, it’s not too late to make a course correction. We can step away from the fray and carve out time to enjoy the stillness of Advent and truly listen to the voice crying out in the desert.

Church of the Ascension

Saratoga, California

www.ascensionsaratoga.org

408-725-3939

Mass Schedule

(Sat) 5p; (Sun) 7a, 9a, 11a, 5p

(Mon-Fri) 8a; (Sat) 9a

SING *Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,*

One more seed is planted there:

Give up your strength the seed to nourish,

That in course the flower may flourish.

People, look east and sing today:

Love, the rose, is on the way.

A Retro Prophet

When Henry Ford put the Model T on the first assembly line, he boasted that you could have it in any color you wanted—as long as it was black. Since those early days, imagine how many cars have been built and how many different designs and colors have been offered. Every year car enthusiasts await each new model eagerly. It is interesting that there is a trend these days to make new cars look vaguely like some classic older models, a “retro” look, it is called. The Mini Cooper and new Dodge Challenger are examples of this trend. (...)

Mark gives us a “retro” prophet, an Old Testament figure to begin his New Testament gospel, a character out of synch with his time. But isn't that the real message of Advent? What is new is old. God has always loved us. The Messiah is the ultimate sign of that love. And what is old is new. The message of salvation is as fresh today as it was 2,000 years ago. God's promise of love remains for us if we remain faithful to God. Advent is what brings the old and new together, like John the Baptizer.

- By Father Dominic Grassi, a retired priest in Chicago and the author of several award-winning books, including “Death in Chicago: Winter” and “Living the Mass with Joe Paprocki.”

Backstory on the Bible

The 73 books in the Catholic Bible were written hundreds, and in some cases thousands, of years before they were officially compiled. It wasn't until the late fourth century that the Catholic Church decided upon the list of sacred scripture to be included. Pope Damasus I presided over the Council of Rome of 382 that determined the scriptural canon, and he commissioned Saint Jerome to translate these texts from Greek into Latin. This collection of sacred books is the inspired word of God, reveals the truth of Revelation, and forms the core of Catholic beliefs. Pass on the Good News! (The memorial of Pope Saint Damasus I is December 11) -Takefiveforfaith.com

Special Collection for Retired Religious

December 10

This collection supports nearly 25,000 elderly religious sisters, brothers and religious order priests in the United States. Thank you for your generosity.

MASS INTENTIONS

Dec 09	Sat	05 pm	George Chrisman +
Dec 10	Sun	07 am	Roseanne Pak (L)
		09 am	Anne Sanquini +
		11 am	Mark Anthony Baylon +
		05 pm	Sophia Scheid (L)
Dec 11	Mon	08 am	Corazon G. Vicencio +
Dec 13	Wed	08 am	Joyce Nunes +
Dec 14	Thu	08 am	Fr. Ben Manding +
Dec 15	Fri	08 am	Bianca Andrews (L)
Dec 16	Sat	09 am	Cheryl G. Vicencio (L)

WEEKLY OFFERING - DEC 3

-**\$4,784** (baskets: \$3,554; online: \$1,230). Weekly goal: \$6,500.

-YTD: **\$128,339**. Budget: \$149,701. Shortfall: \$21,362.

Thank you for your generous support.

Mysterious Mother of the Americas

December 12 - Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

On a wall, under glass, is the life-sized image of Our Lady of Guadalupe—enshrined in the Basilica of Guadalupe, on Tepeyac Hill in Mexico City, where Our Lady appeared to Juan Diego in December 1591. As mysterious and symbolic as the Woman of the Apocalypse described in Revelation 12, it continues to defy human explanation, including analysis from a NASA scientist. The humble cactus fiber cloak it appears on hasn't deteriorated in more than 400 years, nor has the image, which experts from Kodak likened to a photograph though photography wasn't invented yet. Countless miracles are associated with Guadalupe, but the greatest is the conversion of an entire continent. Pray for the people of the Americas with the Center of Concern prayer to Our Lady of Guadalupe that begins: Hail Mary, Lady of Peace, We pray for the peace in our world; make us peacemakers. -Takefiveforfaith.com

Unveiling of Diocesan Pastoral Plan

On Dec. 7, at Our Lady of La Vang Church in San Jose, Bishop Cantú officially unveiled the Diocesan Pastoral Plan, the fruits of many listening sessions in the diocese in a year and a half. The video capturing the celebration is available at Facebook.com/DioceseSanJose. Following is the new diocesan mission/value/vision statements, also resulting from the long synodal process.

MISSION STATEMENT

United as disciples of Jesus Christ and nourished by the Eucharist, the Diocese of San José joyfully shares the Gospel by encountering Jesus in each person and growing together in faith, love, and service.

VALUE STATEMENTS

The people of the Diocese of San José value...

- Living and proclaiming the Gospel as disciples of Jesus Christ
- Welcoming and engaging liturgies and other opportunities for spiritual growth
- Caring for the poor and vulnerable
- Celebrating the rich diversity within our communities
- Collaborating between lay and ordained in ministry
- Partnering among Catholic parishes, schools, ministries, and other organizations
- Caring for the Earth as God's sacred creation and our common home.

VISION STATEMENT

We will grow as a welcoming and thriving Catholic Church, vibrant in our diversity. We are inspired by the Spirit, nurtured by faith in God, and sustained by Word and Sacrament. We will invite every person to encounter Jesus Christ through a unified network of parishes, schools, ministries, and other organizations. We will perform life-changing works of evangelization, formation, charity, and justice. We will act in solidarity with the poor and vulnerable.

December Calendar

ADVENT CONFESSIONS

-Dec. 16, Saturday, 9:45am - 10:45am.

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

-Dec. 24 (4th Advent Sunday): 7:00am, 9:00am, 11:00am

-Dec. 24 (Christmas Eve): 5:00pm, 8:00 pm

-Dec. 25 (Christmas Day): 7:00am, 9:00am, 11:00am.