



December 28, 2025

Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 | Col 3:12-21 | Mt 2:13-15, 19-23

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

In his Angelus address on the Feast of the Holy Family in 2001, St. John Paul II shared this with those gathered: “If we aspire to a deeper understanding of Jesus’ life and mission, we must draw close to the mystery of the Holy Family of Nazareth to observe and listen.” Following in the footsteps of the Holy Family in today’s Scripture, we find ourselves in quiet Bethlehem, just after the departure of the Magi. The angel of the Lord appears to Joseph in a dream, this time with a warning: “Rise, take the child and his mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I tell you. Herod is going to search for the child to destroy him.” They trust in God and their response is immediate. It is easy for us to imagine the Holy Family as different from ourselves — holier and more spiritual. Certainly, that’s true. They were holy but they were also fully human, which means that what they attained is possible for each of us. Let us try to imitate them in this holiness.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

It’s easy to glamorize the life of Joseph, Mary, and Jesus, but in reality, the cross was with them long before the crucifixion. From the moment of the Annunciation, there would be trials, temptations, and sufferings. But each time, they respond with immediate obedience and deep trust. In doing so, they give us all a perfect example of what the Christian life should look like: a life motivated by love and always listening for the voice of God, ready to respond in an instant. As we accompany others on this journey of faith, we also must listen deeply to them in order to help them in discerning the Spirit’s movement in their lives. As we hone the spiritual muscle of attentive listening, we grow in our ability to respond to God and to God’s action in our lives, and to help others do the same.

REFLECT

Most of us will never hear from an angel in the middle of the night telling us to walk hundreds of miles with our baby in tow. But every single one of us will be — has been — called. Let us pray to the Holy Family for an increase in the virtues of obedience and trust, so that we can respond to God’s call in our lives.

Church of the Ascension
ascensionsaratoga.org | 408-725-3939

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

Confessions: (Sat) 4:00-4:45pm

Take Notice of the Poor Among Us

On the walls of the North American headquarters of the Divine Word Missionaries there is a painting from China that depicts the Holy Family living as Chinese peasants. What's especially interesting is that the painting shows them to be poor. In their small hut some paint is peeling from the walls, clothes are patched, and the table has seen better days. While Saint Joseph was probably not desperately poor, he and his family belonged to the vast majority of people who were outside the small elite who controlled most of the wealth and pulled the strings in ancient Palestine. So when Jesus talked about bringing Good News to the poor, he was talking about a whole lot of people, including his own family. What can you do to uplift the poor in your own family and beyond?

-Takefiveforfaith.com

Message for World Day of Peace

For the 2026 World Day of Peace (January 1), Pope Leo XIV issued a message titled *"Peace be with you all: Towards an 'unarmed and disarming' peace"*, calling for moving beyond military deterrence, emphasizing dialogue, spiritual disarmament, restorative justice, and transforming hearts to overcome war and fear, seeing peace as a lived reality and a path of hope against violence.

Celebrate Mary, Mother of God Pray for Peace

January 1 Mass at 9:00 am



Year-End Giving

Thank you for being a part of our Church of the Ascension and for your support. Consider giving a year-end gift to our parish.

WEEKLY OFFERING - Dec. 21

-Total: **\$12,591** (\$10,703, including the \$2,000 annual IRA donation+ online: \$1,888). Goal: \$6,800.

-YTD Sunday: **\$159,917**. Budget: \$170,000.

-Retired Religious: \$119 (YTD: \$2,493).

-Flower Fund: \$520 (YTD: \$1,088).

-Christmas: \$275 (YTD: \$535).

Thank you for your generosity.

MASS INTENTIONS

Dec 27	Sat	05 pm	Alfred Firato, Jr (L)
Dec 28	Sun	09 am	Kathy Boulanger (L)
		11 am	Hai Nguyen +
		05 pm	Joseph Fiorentino, Sr & Family
Dec 29	Mon	08 am	Dolores Wriglesworth (L)
Jan 01	Thu	09 am	(Mary, Mother of God Feast)
Jan 02	Fri	08 am	Amelia Wiele (L)
Jan 03	Sat	09 am	David Honor (L)

"The Lord bless you

and keep you!

The Lord let his face

shine upon you,

and be gracious to you!

The Lord look upon you kindly and give you peace!"

- Numbers 6:24-26

Happy
New Year
2026

Pope Leo: Responsibility Leads to Peace

"Sisters and brothers, responsibility is the sure way to peace. If all of us, at every level, would stop accusing others and instead acknowledge our own faults, asking God for forgiveness, and if we would truly enter into the suffering of others and stand in solidarity with the weak and the oppressed, then the world would change.

"Jesus Christ is our peace first of all because he frees us from sin, and also because he shows us the way to overcome conflicts—all conflicts, whether interpersonal or international. Without a heart freed from sin, a heart that has been forgiven, we cannot be men and women of peace or builders of peace. This is why Jesus was born in Bethlehem and died on the cross: to free us from sin. He is the Savior. With his grace, we can and must each do our part to reject hatred, violence and opposition, and to practice dialogue, peace and reconciliation." - Pope Leo's Christmas 2025 message excerpts

Jerusalem Patriarch: No Time Is Too Dark

Christmas was publicly celebrated in Bethlehem for the first time since 2022. On this occasion, Cardinal Pierbattista Pizzaballa, the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, said, "This is one of the great announcements of Christmas: God does not wait for history to get better before He enters it. He enters while history is what it is. Thus, He teaches us that no time is definitively lost and no situation is too dark for God to dwell in."

Last Jubilee 2025 Door To Close

The last Jubilee Holy Door to close will be that of St. Peter's Basilica on January 6, 2026 at 9:30 am, with a Mass presided over by Pope Leo XIV. The Holy Year officially concludes with the celebrations of the Feast of the Epiphany that day.

Thank You To...

-Our Church Environment Team for preparing our church for Christmas with the beautiful environment;

-Our liturgical ministers and volunteers for their services in the liturgies and behind the scenes these days;

-All who supported Ascension through their Christmas gifts, flower donations, and other contributions this year.

May the Lord bless each of them this holy season and in the coming year.

Parish Office Holidays Schedule

Our Office will be closed on Jan. 1 and Jan. 2.

Happy New Year!