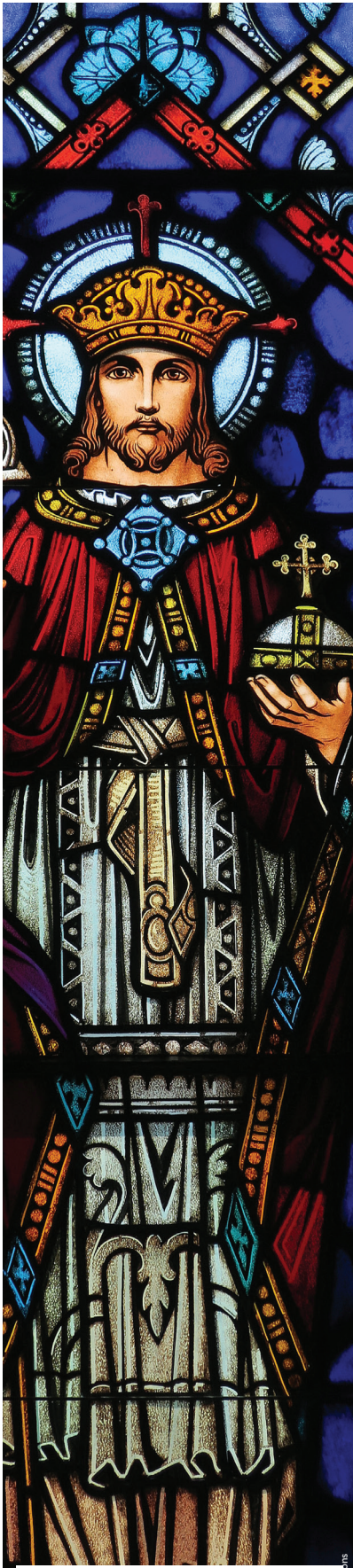


November 26, 2023

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

Ez 34:11-12, 15-17 | 1 Cor 15:20-26, 28 | Mt 25:31-46



The paradoxical ways we have come to understand Jesus can give us spiritual whiplash. He is both a tender and caring shepherd of sheep and one who sends strong rams and goats to the eternal fire; the executed human and divine man who came into full resurrected glory. He is God incarnate into human history and born in a manger; the servant-leader; the one who is both God and man. This is the beauty of what we call the Paschal Mystery – that the Son of God came into the world and by his life, death, and resurrection he has reconciled us to the Father, and has redeemed us. He saves us from the death of sin. As Catholics we are comfortable with paradox: We are inhabitants of a kingdom of God that is already (here) but not yet (fully realized); we are both an Easter people and we live in a world of Good Fridays. So when Jesus says in today’s Gospel that whatever we do to the least of people, we do to Christ himself and we will reap our actions in the fullness of that kingdom, we understand that he is a king unlike any other king. He cares not for pomp and circumstance, but wants to ensure that all – even the least among us – are given his gifts to share. The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe celebrates that we have a king who cares more for us than anyone on earth could ever care for us, and we are blessed to be able to love and serve him in return.

In the midst of our busy lives, it is no secret that our thoughts can easily be preoccupied with things other than prayer or our relationship with God. Perhaps we struggle with maintaining a daily prayer practice. So when we pause to take stock of our lives – where our attention is focused during the day-to-day – it’s easy to see that God is sometimes “off to the side.” Perhaps we take everything we have been given for granted, or maybe we are just not sure how to make him the most important aspect of our lives. Just like cultivating a friendship takes active effort, so does our relationship with God. Just as watering a plant near its center allows the water to spread throughout the surrounding area, to its roots and the soil – thus making it fruitful and full – putting Jesus Christ, our king, at the center of our lives means that his goodness flows into everything else we say and do. Our lives and our hearts will grow in goodness and bear rich fruit.

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

Challenge yourself this week to subvert expectations and keep God first. Show Christ is Lord over your life by prioritizing your faith and building up your priorities around him. Make a daily appointment in your calendar for prayer and look for opportunities to put Christ at the center, or heart, of your daily life.

Save the Best for Last

The film industry has always had a love affair with the afterlife. From *It's a Wonderful Life* to *Heaven Can Wait* to *Ghost to Flatliners*, stories remind us that our choices in this world have ramifications in the next. More recent shows—*Dead Like Me*, *The Good Life*, *After Life*, and *Hotel del Luna* among many others—are less traditionally religious but no less curious about what comes next. Every culture and generation seems to sense the need for spirit guides and guardians, as well as justice and an hour of reckoning. As the church year closes, contemplate the ledger of your years. Does it add up to a heavenly ending?
-*Takefiveforfaith.com*

Quotes

“Peace is not the absence of conflict, but the ability to cope with it.” -*Mahatma Gandhi*

“Peace is but an empty word if it does not rest upon... an order that is founded on *truth*, built up on *justice*, nurtured and animated by *charity*, and brought into effect under the auspices of *freedom*” - *Pope John XXIII's Pacem in terris, 167*

“Peace is not merely the absence of war; nor can it be reduced solely to the maintenance of a balance of power between enemies; nor is it brought about by dictatorship. Instead, it is rightly and appropriately called an enterprise of justice. -*Vatican II's Gaudium et spes, 78*

Annual Layette Drive

Sunday, **December 3, 2023**

Drop off items from **11:00 am - 2:00 pm**

At Isolation Products, **157 San Lazaro Ave, Sunnyvale.**

Donate new baby items or hand-crafted layette items, for babies 0-6 months. This is a wonderful way to support women and new mothers who may be facing financial or emotional challenges.

Concerts at Ascension

Nova Vista Symphony & San Jose Symphonic Choir present Holiday Celebration at Church of the Ascension on Sunday, December 3, 2023 at 7:30 pm.

Masks are recommended.

General admission: \$25. Seniors/Students: \$20.

Children 12 and under: Free.

Tickets can be purchased at the door or online at www.novavista.org/tickets

MASS INTENTIONS

Nov 25	Sat	05 pm	Maxine Stice +
Nov 26	Sun	07 am	Joselito Rabelas (L)
		09 am	Anne Sanquini +
		11 am	Cabrales-Montoya Family
Nov 27	Mon	08 am	Fr. Ben Manding +
Nov 29	Wed	08 am	Remedios Doria +
Dec 01	Fri	08 am	Diane Lattanzi +
Dec 02	Sat	09 am	Louisa Whelan (L)

WEEKLY OFFERING - NOV 19

-**\$6,516** (baskets: \$5,145; online: \$1,371). Weekly goal: \$6,500.

-Human Development collection: **\$1,432**.

-YTD: **\$118,509**. Budget: \$136,701. Shortfall: \$18,192.

Thank you for your generous support.

December Calendar

ADVENT REFLECTION

Let us prepare for Advent with **Fr. Maurice Igboerika >>>** who will celebrate the Mass and give us a reflection on the upcoming Advent season on Saturday, Dec. 2, 2023 at 9:00am.



IMMACULATE CONCEPTION MASS SCHEDULE

-Dec. 7, Thursday, at 7:00pm (Vigil Mass)

-Dec. 8, Friday, at 8:00am (Mass of the Day)

ADVENT CONFESSIONS

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

CHRISTMAS MASS SCHEDULE

-Dec. 24 (4th Sunday, Advent): 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.

Monastery Goodies Fundraiser

Purchase your holiday candies through Ascension and raise funds for our Youth Faith Formation in the process.

The bakery and confectionery run by the Dominican Nuns Monastery in Hollywood offer Handmade, Sweet & Delicious Bread, Candies, et. Treat yourself, your family and friends to old fashioned Pumpkin Bread, copper kettle Peanut Brittle, and a heavenly assortment of candies.

Place your order using **promotional code “Ascension” for 10% discount (must be received by Dec. 1).**

- at **MonasteryGoodies.com** (Enter the code at the very end of the online purchase process).

- or **fill out the paper order form** (available in church) and mail it with a check to the Monastery.

Giving Tree - by Dec. 10

This year Ascension will support the work of these local organizations:

-**Catholic Charities** of Santa Clara County is seeking gift cards for their clients from Target, Safeway, Lucky, Walmart, Grocery Outlet, or a Visa Gift Card. They ask that gift cards be clearly marked with their value.

-**Help One Child** is requesting about 80 gifts. Gift tags will be on the Giving Tree. Donors choose a tag depicting a child's first name, age, gender, and wished-for gift.

FORMED - What Is It?

Have you tried listening to a 6-minute podcast about Marriage while driving to work? Or hear a story about the life of a saint -- while gardening or doing household chores? This is the gift we have been given with FORMED, an on-demand Catholic resource. One of our parishioners has been using FORMED for over a year. If you have any questions (downloading, installing, or ideas on what to watch) reach out to her via email or phone: loy.oppus@gmail.com or call the parish at (408) 725-3939.