December 25, 2017

St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church

Oh Come Let Us Adore Him!

PO Box 7548—Salem OR 97303
1010 Columbia Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301-7265
E-mail: stvdp@qwestoffice.net
Website: www.stvincentparishsalem.org
Fax: 503-363-9493

MASS SCHEDULE / HORAIO del MISAS

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, & Friday Lunes, Martes, Jueves, y Viernes	8:00 AM Mass
Wednesday with School Community Miércoles con la escuela	8:30 AM Mass
Saturday / Sábado	5:30 PM Mass
Sunday / Domingo	8:15 AM Mass
	10:15 AM Mass
	1:00 PM (Spanish) Mass

CONFESSIONS / CONFESIONES

Saturday / Sábado	4:00 - 5:00 PM
Sunday / Domingo	7:30 - 8:00 AM

Immediately after a weekday Mass.
Inméritamente después de Misa durante la semana.

BAPTISM / BAUTISMOS

Call the Parish Office for information on classes.
Llama a la Oficina para mas información.

MARRIAGE / MATRIMONIO

Call the Parish Office to schedule an appointment with a Priest.
Llama a la Oficina para ser una cita con el Sacerdote.

MINISTRY TO SICK/HOMEBOUND
MINISTERIO DE LOS INFERMOS

Call Don Fusco, extension 213, to have Holy Communion brought to the sick or homebound.
Llama a la Oficina para pedir la Eucaristía para un enfermo.

SACRAMENT OF THE SICK
SACRAMENTO DEL ENFERMO

Call the Parish Office prior to surgery or when seriously ill.
Llama a la Oficina antes de un cirugía o de enfermedad grave.

CHRISTIAN BURIAL
ENTIERRO CRISTIANO

Call the Parish Office to discuss plans before finalizing plans with the mortuary.

Llama a la Oficina antes de finalizar planes con la funeraria.

PARISH OFFICE 503-363-4589

Monday - Friday / Lunes - Viernes
9:00 - 12:00 noon; 1:00 - 6:00 PM

	Extension
Rev. Joseph Heuberger, Pastor	211
Rev. Fredy Bonilla Moreno, Parochial Vicar	212
Sr. Guadalupe Carrillo, MRF	215
Sue Minten, Business Office	214
Diane Blair, Bookkeeper	217
Don Fusco, Ministry to Sick & Homebound	213
Lisa Mangers, Youth & Young Adult Ministries	216
Annie Duffy, Parish Secretary	210
Ken Braendle & Richard Rice, Physical Plant	
Jan Riedl, Music Coordinator	

PARISH SCHOOL
ESCUELA PARROQUIAL

Monday - Friday / Lunes - Viernes
7:30 AM - 4:00 PM

Maria Palacio, Principal 503-363-8457

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION
EDUCACION RELIGOSA

Monday - Thursday / Lunes - Jueves
10:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Sheila Machado, Director 503-363-2166
Janette Rheinholdt, Assistant Director
Yadira Castañeda, Assistant

PASTORAL COUNCIL
CONSEJO PASTORAL

Gracie Rivera, Chair	Rafael Luna
Wenseslao Castañeda	Neil Mahoney
James Carter	Susan Reich
Dave Martinmaas	Laura Saavedra
Viridiana Pozos	

ST VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY
SOCIADAD DE SAN VICENTE

503-364-5672

Our Legal Name Is: St Vincent de Paul Catholic Church, Salem, Oregon / A Parish Corporation — Please consider the Church in your will.

Fourth Sunday of Advent / Cuerero Domingo de Adviento
December 24, 2017 - Luke / Lucas 1:26-38

"Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God."

The liturgical calendar sometimes plays tricks on us. This year, Sunday begins as the Fourth Sunday of Advent and ends as Christmas Eve. The angel Gabriel arrives on Mary's doorstep in the morning, announcing her conception. By midnight, she gives birth to Emmanuel. What a day our Mary has had!

As funny as it seems, today's calendar collision is also a keyhole into the mysteries of God. The word of God is barely spoken before it's realized. In the beginning, there's no hesitation between the command, "Let there be light," and the reality of light separated from darkness. In the same way, God determined that word becomes flesh—and Jesus moves into our neighborhood before we know it. There's no gap between divine intention and its fulfillment. Can you and I say the same?

Have a Merry Christmas! Close the gap between intention and action in your dealings with family and friends this season.

"Mas el ángel le dijo, ¡María, no temas, porque has hallado gracia en los ojos de Dios"!

El calendario litúrgico nos juega malas pasadas a veces. Este año, el domingo comienza como el Cuarto Domingo de Adviento y termina como la Nochebuena. El ángel Gabriel llega a la puerta de María por la mañana, anunciando su concepción. A medianoche, da la luz a Emmanuel. ¡Qué día ha tenido María!

Por divertido que parezca, la colisión del calendario de hoy es también un ojo de la cerradura en los misterios de Dios. La palabra de Dios es apenas pronunciada antes de que se cuenta. En el principio, no hay duda entre el mandamiento, "Que haya luz", y la realidad de la luz separada de la oscuridad. De la misma manera, Dios determinó que la palabra se convierte en carne y Jesús se traslada a nuestro vecindario antes de que lo sepamos. No hay brecha entre la intención divina y su cumplimiento. ¿Podemos decir lo mismo?

¡Que tengas una feliz Navidad! Cierra la brecha entre la intención y la acción en tus tratos con familia y amigos esta temporada.

Preparation for next Sunday

Lecturas Del Próximo Domingo

First Reading
Primera Lectura
Genesis
15:1-6; 21:1-3

Responsorial
Psalm / Salmo
105:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9

Second Reading
Segunda Lectura
Hebrews / Hebreos
11:8, 11-12, 17-19

Gospel
Evangelio
Luke / Lucas
2:22-40

Pray for the Sick & Home Bound / Rezar por los Enfermos

May the healing love of prayer touch the following:
Que el amor curativo de la oración toque los siguientes:

Bertilda Alfonzo	Ted Hillyer	Mel Lulay	Joaquin Ojeda
Leonora Beyer	Teresa Hisgen	Eloiza Macaranas	Kennan Outland
Ellena Burger	Tom Horner	Manuel Machado	Betty Pappert
Willetta Boehm	Sue Howard	Bob Mangers	Christian Quevedo
Candido Bonilla	Sandra Isom	Dave Mangers	Laura Renner
Bev Bowers	Khrizman Kuhn	Andrea Martinez	John Riedl
Tom Chase	Robert Kovarik	Virginia Matthey	Naomi C. Ruth
Beth Crocker	Lisa Kosiewicz-Doran	Xinbei Maxwell	Robbie Sandver
Dennis Engelhard	Linda Lanaro	Melissa McKechnie	Russell Stinnett
Clell Ewing	Mildred Lesmeister	Rita Miller	Anthony Taisacan
Jennillie Flores	Wilma Lesmeister	Marina Moreno	Margaret Trudeau
Sammy Fratto	Dave Louthan	Evelyn Nibler	Maggy Welker
Gary Hill			Joe White

Prayer Candles / Velas de Oración

To request a prayer candle to burn throughout the week, envelopes are in the alcove near the Holy Family statues.

- For the recovery of/Para la recuperación de Del

Para solicitar una vela de oración para encenderla durante toda la semana,

A message from Fr. Heuberger / Mensaje del Padre Heuberger

Christmas To all parishioners it is our hope that our parish activities and Christmas liturgies will help us open our hearts and homes to the blessings of peace, and hope, and the spirit of love that Our Savior's birth brings. On behalf of Fr. Heuberger, Fr. Fredy, Deacon Jose Roman, and the Sisters, we extend to you the blessing of the feast of Christmas.

Thank You to those who donated for flowers, cleaned the church, decorated and put up the crib, the musicians and choirs whose efforts contribute greatly to our liturgies. We commend our parish organizations which give of their time and effort throughout the year: the Pastoral Council and Committees, Altar Society, Parents' Club and School Board, Religious Ed teachers, Knights of Columbus, Homebound ministers, and Apostles of the Word.

At this Christmas time we remember all those who have died, loved ones, parishioners, friends, relatives; that in God's hands they may find peace and light. Our love, because it is informed by divine love, holds on to people, as they have gone ahead of us, may they be accompanied by our love and prayers. They have labored in faith and love, passed on the Faith, and made possible the celebration of Christ's birth in our time, the year 2017.

Navidad A todos los feligreses, esperamos que nuestras actividades parroquiales y liturgias de Navidad nos ayuden a abrir nuestros corazones y hogares a las bendiciones de la paz, la esperanza y el espíritu de amor que trae el nacimiento de nuestro Salvador. En nombre del P. Heuberger, P. Fredy, el Diácono José Román, y las Hermanas, les extendemos la bendición de la fiesta de Navidad.

Gracias a los que donaron para las flores, limpiaron la iglesia, decoraron y pusieron la cuna, los músicos y coros cuyos esfuerzos contribuyen enormemente a nuestra liturgias. Encomiamos a nuestras organizaciones parroquiales que brindan su tiempo y esfuerzo durante todo el año: el Consejo Pastoral y los Comités, Social del Altar, Club de Padres y Junta Escolar, maestros de Doctrina, Caballeros de Colón, ministros de los enfermos, y Apóstoles de la Palabra.

En esta tiempo de Navidad, recordamos a todos aquellos que han muerto, seres queridos, feligreses, amigos, parientes; que en las manos de Dios puedan encontrar la paz y la luz. Nuestro amor, porque está informado por el amor divino, se aferra a personas, ya que nos han precedido, pueden ser acompañado de nuestro amor y oraciones. Ellos tienen Trabajó en la fe y en el amor, transmitió la fe e hizo posible la celebración

Mass Intentions

Intenciones de la Misa

Vigil of Christmas			
Sunday	12/24	5:30pm	Family Mass
		8:00pm	Mass in Spanish
		11:00pm	Midnight Mass
Christmas Day			
Monday	12/25	10:00am	Mass in English
		1:00pm	Mass in Spanish
Tuesday	12/26	8:00am	Juan Q. Muna ✞
Wednesday	12/27	8:30am	Peter Steele ✞
Thursday	12/28	8:00am	Albert Richard ✞
Friday	12/29	8:00am	Gary Martinmaas ✞
Saturday	12/30	5:30pm	Elizabeth McIsaac ✞

Reconciliation Schedule / Horario de Reconciliación

No Confession on Sunday, December 24th, nor Monday, December 25th.

RECONCILED *with God*

Religious Education / Educación Religiosa

Sheila Machado, Director 503-363-2166 — FAX 503-363-9493 — Email stvreled@yahoo.com
Office Hours Monday—Thursday 10 am to 5 pm—Lunes –Jueves desde 10 am hasta las 5 pm

We pray that you are enjoying your Christmas break and are staying safe and warm. Remember to place your envelopes in the collection basket each time you attend Mass.

A reminder to all Catechists: we will meet on **TUESDAY, January 2, 2018** at 6:30 pm for Lesson Planning/Faith Formation session on Reedy Hall. We will be planning the next 6 lessons. Please be on time, bring your calendar and Catechist Manual.

Oramos que disfrutes de tus vacaciones de Navidad y te mantengas seguro y cálido. Recuerde colocar sus sobres en la canasta de recolección cada vez que asista a Misa.

Un recordatorio para todos los Catequistas: nos reuniremos el **MARTES, 2 de enero de 2018** a las 6:30 pm para la sesión de Planificación de Lección / Formación de Fe en Reedy Hall. Planearemos las próximas 6 lecciones. Llegue a tiempo, traiga su calendario y el Manual del Catequista.

Have a blessed week / Que tengas una semana bendecida! ***Sheila, Janette & Yadira***

Youth Ministry / Ministerio de la Juventud

If you have any questions please call / Si tienes preguntas llama ha Lisa Mangers 503-363-4589 x216

NO Youth Night this Wednesday, December 27th. See you January 3, 2018!

January Confirmation Session on January 14th, from 2:30 pm to 7 pm in Reedy Hall. See you there.

Youth Leadership Meeting on January 14th from 7:30 pm to 9 pm.

NO HAY Noche de Jóvenes este Miércoles, 27 de Diciembre. ¡Nos vemos el 3 de enero de 2018!

Sesión de confirmación de enero el 14 de enero, de 2:30 pm a 7 pm en Reedy Hall. Te veo allí.

Reunión de Lideres Juvenil el 14 de enero desde 7:30 pm a 9 pm.

Young Adult Ministry

If you have any questions please call Lisa Mangers at extension 216. Llama a Lisa si tienes preguntas.

- ☑ **Come join our Married Couples Group!** Our next night is Tuesday, January 2nd. We meet once a month for fellowship and discussion on married life. If you are interested in joining us, please email **stvyam@hotmail.com**.

- ☑ **FIRST THURSDAYS – Thursday, January 4th — *Vocations & Discernment - How Will I Know?*** **Guest speaker: Sr. Michael Francine Duncan -** Vocation Director - Sisters of St. Mary of Oregon. We meet at 7 pm at McMenamin's Thompson Brewery & Public House—3575 Liberty Rd. S. - Salem. No food or drink purchase necessary.

- ☑ **YA Bible Study –** We will NOT meet this Tuesday, December 26th, but join us in January!

- ☑ **Young Adult Group** for 18-23 yrs. old ~ will NOT meet this Wednesday, December 27th. See you January 3rd!

Please pick up a flyer with current Young Adult Activities on the kiosk in the gathering area.

Thank You! *We thank everyone for all the generous food donations and all the volunteers of the Parish who packed and delivered the Christmas Dinner Baskets.*

Families receiving the gifts are happy that our Parish can share our blessings.

St. Vincent de Paul Society and Conference

Recuerda la ofrenda de tu iglesia

December 2017 Offertory Collection
Colecta de ofertorios de diciembre de 2017

	Amount Pledged Cantidad prometida	Collected Colecte	Difference Diferencia	MTD Total Total por mes
Week 1	$8,904.00	$11,566.35	$2,662.35	$2,662.35
Week 2	$8,904.00	$9,000.33	$96.33	$2,758.68
Week 3	$8,904.00	$6,895.68	-$2,008.32	$750.36
Week 4	$8,904.00			

2017 Yearend Donations

Please consider a generous gift at this time to help your Church continue to do God's work. IRS regulations require we date your donation as of the day received in our office.
Por favor, considere un regalo generoso en este momento para ayudar a su Iglesia a continuar haciendo el trabajo de Dios. Las regulaciones del IRS requieren que

Coffee and Donut Schedule

December 31	**VOLUNTEER NEEDED**
January 7, 2018	Pastoral Council
January 14	Obery Family
January 21	School Breakfast Fundraiser—**No donuts**
January 28	Altar Society
February 4	Pastoral Council
February 11	Filipino American Community
February 18	School Breakfast Fundraiser—**No donuts**
February 25	Altar Society

2018

Columbus Club #5060
Oyster and Fish Dinners
$13 per person

Friday, January 5
Doors open at 5 pm
Dinner at 6 pm
725 Shipping St NE—Salem

Questions:
Contact Neil Mahoney 503-364-8214

Stress in Your Marriage? – Retrouvaille is a program for married couples that feel bored, disillusioned, frustrated, or angry in their marriage. Some experience coldness. Others experience conflict in their relationship. Most don't know how to change the situation or even communicate with their spouse about it. This program has helped 10's of 1000's of couples experiencing difficulties in their marriage. For confidential information about or to register for the program beginning with a weekend on **January 19-21, 2018**, call 1-503-225-9191 or visit www.helpourmarriage.org.

Retrouvaille
... a lifeline for Marriages

RACHEL'S VINEYARD MINISTRIES

Rachel's Vineyard Retreats are for anyone who has been impacted by abortion. "*It was amazing and restorative - a safe beginning of healthy grieving & acknowledgement- initiating a beginning of the ability to move forward in other aspects of my life.*"

May this holy season of fulfilled longing and hope through Our Savior lead you toward a life-change at a Rachel's Vineyard Retreat where mercy, compassion, and forgiveness bring Jesus' healing.

Upcoming 2018 retreats:
February 16-18 in Portland
April 27-29 in Medford

For more information call Project Aurora at 541-942-2861
Email ProjectAurora@aol.com or Visit www.project-aurora.org.

MARRIED COUPLES "The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me; . . ." Let your spirits be augmented by attending a **Worldwide Marriage Encounter** (WWME) weekend with your spouse. The next weekend is **February 23 - 25, 2018** at Mt. Angel Abbey.

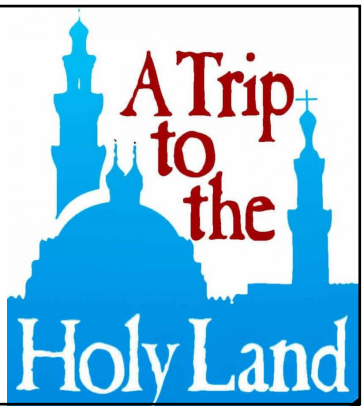
For more information call 503-853-2758 or apply on-line at www.rediscoverthespark.org. Additional dates and locations are listed on-line.

Holy Land Tour May 21-30, 2018

Hosted by Fr. Gregg Bronsema, deadline for interest is January 15, 2018.
Cost: $3,072 - $3,195

Interested please call Fr. Gregg at (503)636-7687 or frgregg@ollparish.com

Our Lady of the Lake Catholic Church, Parochial Vicar
650 A Avenue
Lake Oswego, OR 97034
(503) 636-7687



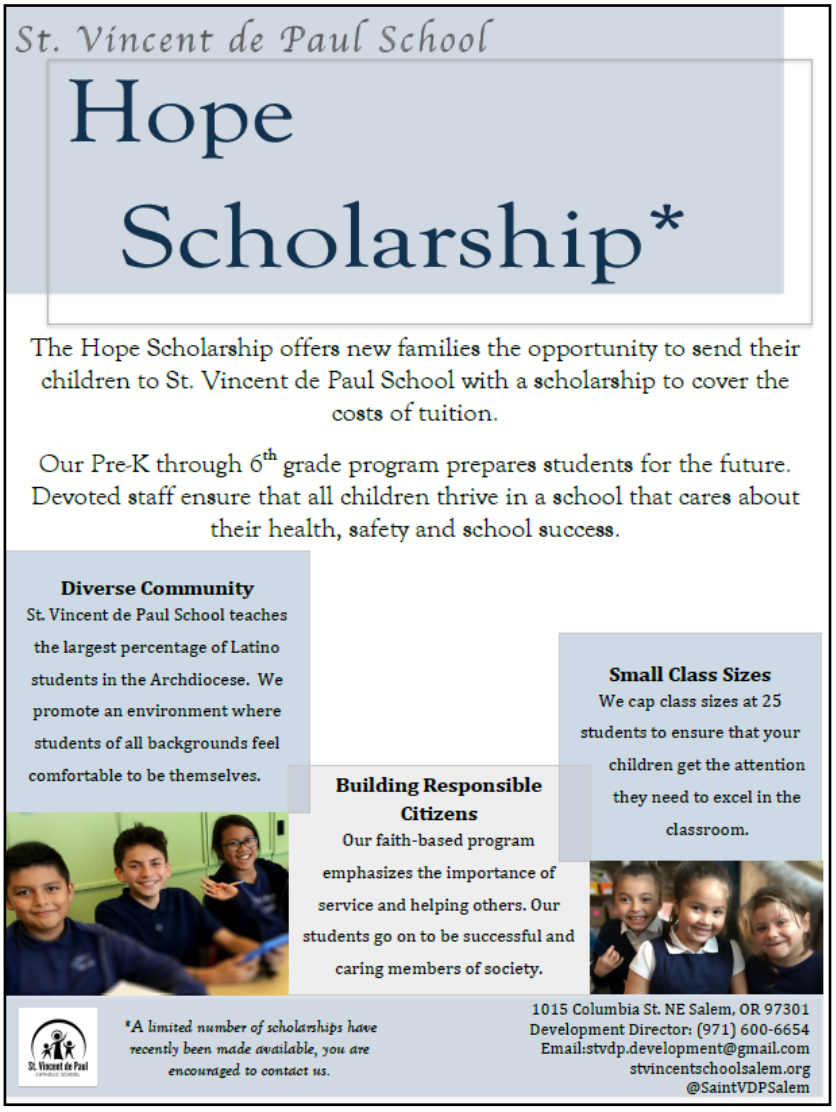
St. Vincent de Paul School

Rooted In Hope

2018 Benefit Auction

SAVE THE DATE

St. Vincent School Auction March 10, 2018



We still have 6 ***Hope Scholarships*** available for students! These Scholarships cover full fees and tuition for **new** students of financial need enrolling in St. Vincent de Paul School. These scholarships are renewable each year the student attends St. Vincent de Paul School. Please contact the school to make an appointment with the Principal Maria Palacio.

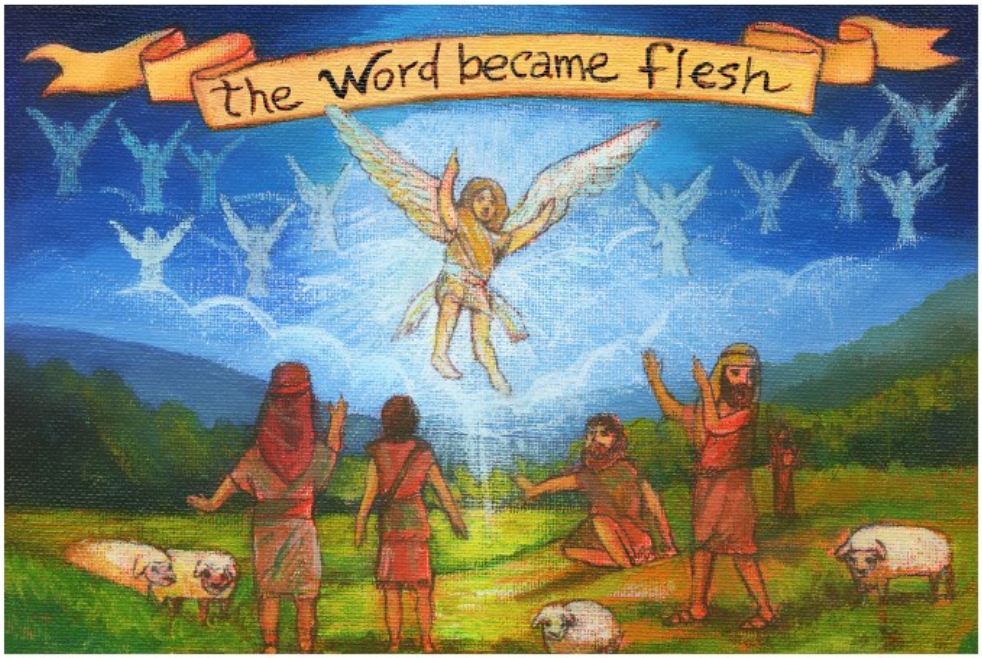
Our "Rooted in Hope Auction" is just around the corner! It will be from 5 pm to 9 pm at the East Salem Community Center.

Call Sara Duncan, Development Director at 503-363-8457 to pre-order tickets or make an auction donation!

¡Todavía tenemos 6 ***Becas de Esperanza*** disponibles para los estudiantes! Estas becas cubren los aranceles y la matrícula completa para los estudiantes **nuevos** con necesidades económicas que se inscriban en la escuela San Vicente de Paul. Estas becas son renovables cada año que el estudiante asiste a la escuela San Vicente de Paul. Por favor, póngase en contacto con la escuela para hacer una cita con el director Maria Palacio.

¡Nuestra "Subasta Enraizada en Esperanza" está a la vuelta de la esquina! Será desde las 5 pm hasta las 9 pm en el Centro Comunitario de East Salem. ¡Llame la escuela al 503-363-8457 para hacer una donación para la subasta!

THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD



Awaken Your Love

Loving God,
you sent your Word to dwell among us
and reveal to us your glory.
By sending us the Light, your only Son,
you have blessed your people who once lived
in darkness.
On this great feast of the Incarnation,
we lift our voices and give you praise for your
awesome deeds.
Like your servant John the Baptist,
grant us confidence to testify to the gift of
your Son, who is our salvation.
Send us forth proclaiming the gifts of your
mercy and love,
which you revealed in your Incarnate Word,
so that, all who hear the Good News may
come to know Christ.
May we, who received the Light at Baptism,
persevere in faith, hope, and love
as we forever sing of your saving power.
Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Monday, December 25, 2017
Word Made Flesh

Today's Readings: Isaiah 52:7–10; Psalm 98:1, 2–3, 3–4, 5–6; Hebrews 1:1–6; John 1:1–18. On this day, all creation sings out in joy, for the Lord God has revealed to us his mighty deeds. During Advent and Christmas, it is easy to be caught up in the hype of secular society. As Christians, however, we need to reflect upon the "saving power of God" (Psalm 98). What does the Incarnation mean in your life and in the life of the Christian? Praying with Psalm 98, it becomes clear how profound God's love is for his Chosen People, and this is what we celebrate in unison with every corner of creation.

John's Gospel recounts the story of the Incarnation in an extended poetic form. Jesus, the Word become flesh, shines in the darkness and is the One who gives life. Every Sunday when we hear the Scriptures proclaimed, the Word is alive and trying to find a home in our hearts. Listen to the Word; hear the Word; allow the Word to rouse your heart to action and transform it so your life becomes a proclamation of the Good News, the Word made flesh.

THIS WEEK AT HOME

Las Posadas

Las Posadas is a nine-day Advent celebration that begins on December 16 and ends on Christmas Eve. Today, it is celebrated in many Latin American countries and has become common across the United Stated. Augustinian Spanish friars, who were evangelizing the New World, first brought Las Posadas to Mexico during the sixteenth century. In 1586, Pope Sixtus V issued a Papal Bull that granted permission for Christmas Masses to be celebrated the nine days preceding the solemnity of Christ's birth.

Las Posadas is intended to help participants prepare for the celebration of the birth of Christ. The novena-like celebration is a communal event that reenacts Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem. The nine days also symbolize the nine months of Mary's pregnancy. The Lucan Gospel account tells us that Mary and Joseph searched for a place to stay, but the inn (*posada*) was full. They find shelter, but not in an inn, which is how Jesus is born in the manger.

For this celebration, the community gathers during the evening with lighted candles. With two individuals portraying Mary and Joseph (and sometimes with a donkey), the group sings carols and makes their way to the first stop. The pilgrims or *peregrinos* go from place to place seeking shelter but are rejected at first by the "innkeepers." Eventually, the group arrives at the final house and is welcomed into the home, singing "Enter, Enter, Holy Pilgrims."

Once the group arrives at the final house, traditional songs, such as "Canción para pedir posada," are sung and then followed by Scripture readings and prayers. The evening concludes with a festive meal and activities for children.

This tradition, steeped in God's hospitality, reminds the participants that Christians must show hospitality to the poor and marginalized. Las Posadas can help parish communities deepen their devotion to the Holy Family. This is a festive and prayerful way to celebrate Advent and meditate on the Holy Family's journey to Bethlehem.

Simbang Gabi

Simbang Gabi is a nine-day Advent devotion that has been celebrated in the Philippines since the sixteenth century. Like Las Posadas, these "Dawn Masses," begin on December 16 and end on December 24 with the *Misa de Gallo* (Rooster's Mass). The Filipino celebration has roots in Mexico, when in 1587 the pope allowed outdoor Masses for Christmas since the celebration was too large to hold indoors.

Liturgically, these nine Masses are intended to help the community prepare their hearts and minds to receive the Christ Child at Christmas. They are also celebrated as a nine-day novena to the Blessed Virgin Mary. Tradition says that these nine days corresponded to the nine-day harvest festivals once held by the Filipino community.

During the nine days, Mass is traditionally celebrated outside in the early morning before sunrise, hence the name Rooster's Mass. This practice was intended to accommodate the farmers who could attend Mass early and then get into the fields for harvest. When the first sounds of dawn rang out, the family made their way to the church for the festivities. In the United States today, some parishes celebrate these Masses earlier in the evening to accommodate modern work schedules.

The making of decorations called *parol* is a Filipino tradition that continues today. The *parol* is a paper lantern that commemorates the Star of Bethlehem. Since these Masses were celebrated before dawn, the lanterns helped guide farmers and their families to Mass. You might consider asking the art and environment team at your parish if you and others could make *parols* and decorate the space for these liturgies. Even though it is Advent, at these Masses, because of special permissions, the priest wears white vestments and the assembly sings the "Glory to God." Other traditional songs include, "Pasko na Naman" (It's Christmas Again), and "Himig Pasko." Once the liturgy is concluded, the community continues the celebration with food and conversation. Traditional treats include *puto*, *kutsinta*, and *bibingka*. If you missed this celebration this year, mark your calendars for the coming year and take part in the festivities.

LTP

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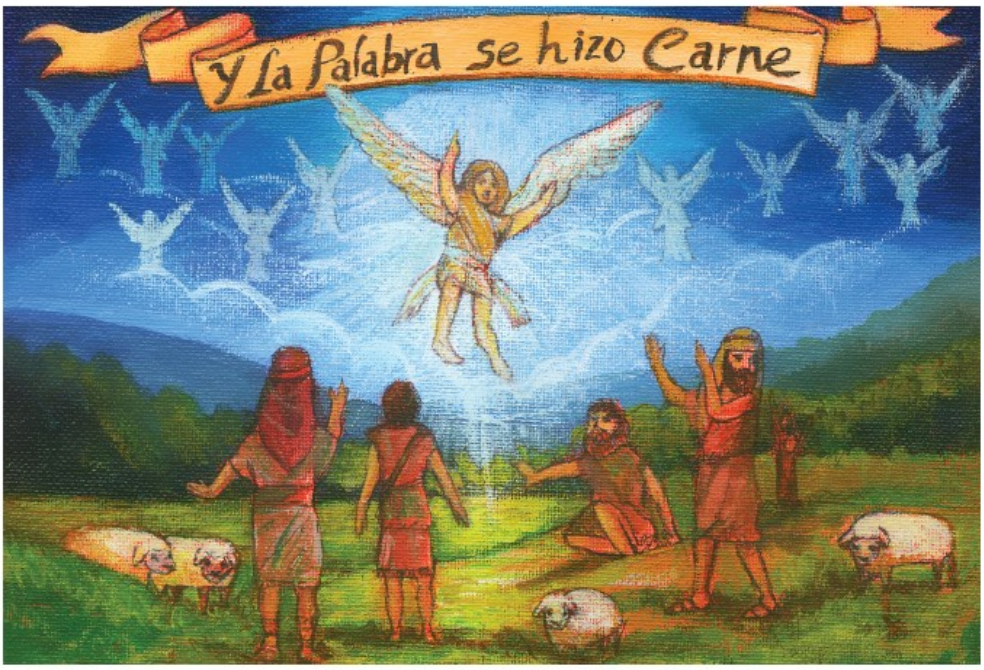
LA NATIVIDAD DEL SEÑOR



Despierta tu amor

Dios de amor,
enviaste tu Palabra a morar entre nosotros
y a revelarnos tu gloria.
Al enviarnos la Luz, tu Hijo único,
has bendecido al pueblo que habitaba
en tinieblas.
En esta gran fiesta de la Encarnación,
elevamos nuestra voz y te alabamos
por tus portentos.
Como a Juan el Bautista, tu siervo,
danos confianza para dar testimonio del don
de tu Hijo, salvación nuestra.
Envíanos a proclamar los dones de tu
misericordia y tu amor,
que nos has revelado en tu Palabra encarnada,
para que todo el que escuche la Buena Nueva
conozca a Cristo.
Que quienes recibimos la luz bautismal,
perseveremos en la fe, la esperanza y el amor,
y cantemos tu poder redentor.
Por Cristo nuestro Señor. Amén.

Lunes, 25 de diciembre de 2017

Palabra hecha carne

Lecturas del día: Isaías 52:7–10; Salmo 98:1, 2–3, 3–4, 5–6; Hebreos 1:1–6; Juan 1:1–18. Hoy, la creación entera canta de alegría, porque el Señor nos ha revelado sus obras portentosas. En Adviento y Navidad, es fácil caer en el frenesí de la sociedad secular. Los cristianos, sin embargo, necesitamos pensar en "el poder salvador de Dios" (Salmo 98). ¿Qué significado tiene la Encarnación en su vida y en la vida cristiana? Al orar con el Salmo 98, note lo profundo que es el amor de Dios para su pueblo elegido, y cómo es celebrado en todas partes por la creación.

El evangelio de Juan habla de la Encarnación en una forma poética. Jesús, la Palabra hecha carne, brilla en las tinieblas y es el que da vida. Cada domingo, al escuchar las Escrituras, la Palabra vive y busca hogar en nuestro corazón. Escuche la Palabra. Acójala. Deje que la Palabra lleve su corazón a la acción y lo transforme, para que su vida se vuelva proclamación de la Buena Nueva, de la Palabra hecha carne.

LA SEMANA EN CASA

Las Posadas

Las Posadas son una celebración de nueve días que comienza el 16 de diciembre y termina la víspera de Navidad. Se celebran en muchos países de Latinoamérica y se han popularizado en los Estados Unidos. Los frailes agustinos, evangelizadores del Nuevo Mundo, trajeron las Posadas a México en el siglo XVI. En 1586, el papa Sixto V emitió una bula concediendo celebrar misas para celebrar los nueve días precedentes a la solemnidad del nacimiento de Cristo.

Las Posadas ayudan a celebrar el nacimiento de Cristo. El novenario es una representación de la jornada de María y José a Belén. Los nueve días simbolizan los nueve meses del embarazo de María. El evangelio de Lucas cuenta que María y José buscaban un sitio para hospedarse, pero la posada estaba llena. Encontraron abrigo, pero no en un albergue, sino en un pesebre, donde nació Jesús.

Para esta celebración, la comunidad se reúne durante la noche con velas encendidas. Dos personas representan a los peregrinos María y José; a los que se les puede facilitar un burro. El grupo canta villancicos y se encamina a la primera posada. Los peregrinos van de casa en casa pidiendo posada, pero siempre reciben negativas de los inquilinos. Finalmente, el grupo llega a la última casa donde los peregrinos son aceptados y entran; entonces todos cantan: "Entren santos peregrinos…" y otros cantos de alegre bienvenida. En el lugar, se leen los pasajes de las Escrituras alusivos al nacimiento de Cristo, se hacen oraciones y se acompañan con villancicos. Se termina dando la colación o alguna golosina y rompiendo piñatas para chicos y grandes, que simbolizan las gracias celestes que Cristo nos trae. Se organizan juegos y otras amenidades, acompañados de tamales, buñuelos, ponche, champurrado, chocolate y otras delicias que hacen el contento de todos. Es una fiesta popular; todos son bienvenidos.

Esta tradición, habla de la hospitalidad de Dios y recuerda a los participantes que los cristianos deben ser hospitalarios y generosos con los pobres y marginados. Las Posadas ayudan a profundizar en la devoción a la Sagrada Familia. Se trata de un modo festivo y orante de celebrar el Adviento, de meditar en la jornada de la Sagrada Familia a Belén.

Simbang Gabi

Simbang Gabi es un novenario que se celebra en las Filipinas desde el siglo XVI. Es similar a las Posadas. Se trata de un novenario de Misas de Aurora, celebradas del 16 al 24 de diciembre cuando se cierra con una Misa de Gallo. La celebración tiene sus raíces en México, cuando el Papa concedió celebrar Misas de Navidad a la intemperie, pues eran demasiado largas.

Litúrgicamente, estas misas ayudan a la comunidad a prepararse para recibir al Niño Dios, a la vez que es un novenario en honor a la Santísima Virgen María. La tradición dice que los nueve días corresponden a los nueve días de fiestas por las cosechas que había entre los nativos filipinos.

Durante nueve días, la misa es celebrada a la intemperie, en la madrugada, antes de que salga el sol, es Misa de Gallo. Era la manera práctica como los campesinos podían acudir a misa, antes de salir a la cosecha. Al primer canto del gallo, en la madrugada, la familia se encaminaba a la iglesia. En los Estados Unidos, estas misas se celebran por la tarde, según convenga al horario de los feligreses.

Fabricar las decoraciones, *parol*, es una tradición que se conserva hasta hoy. Se trata de linternas de papel que conmemoran la estrella de Belén. Con estas se iluminaban en el camino para ir a misa. Consulte con el equipo de ambientación litúrgica de su parroquia sobre la conveniencia de fabricar *parols*, y decorar el espacio adecuado para tales liturgias. Incluso siendo Adviento, en esas misas, y con permisos especiales, el sacerdote se reviste de blanco y la asamblea canta el Gloria. Otros cantos tradicionales son "Pasko na Naman" (De nuevo es Navidad) y "Himig Pasko" (Canción de Navidad). Concluida la liturgia, la comunidad continúa la celebración con comida y animada conversación. Lo habitual es saborear deliciosas confituras y pastelillos de arroz, tales como *bibingka*, *phuto* y *kutsinta*. Marque su calendario para asistir a esta celebración y súmase al festejo.

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