



# Church of Santa Maria

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## Our totally attainable highest calling

*On our Lenten journey to the heart of God and the opportunity to truly and personally know God's love*

*Pictured: The car crash described in the article below basically happened like the one pictured here - except the big truck was going the other way, and the car in question was a silver Volvo S40 instead of a red... whatever that is.*



The 2nd Sunday of Lent  
March 5, 2023

*Last week we explored how knowing about God isn't the same as knowing God - and that our hearts, by design, won't let us settle for less than the real thing. (Good job, hearts! Keep those standards high!!) I thought that in our Lenten journey to the heart of God, it might be nice to start with an image of God's love as an entry point. This article is based on a keynote talk I gave at a teen retreat last weekend for St. Bonaventure.*

I want to tell you about my first and only car crash. I was a junior or senior in high school driving a silver, very un-cool, very safe 2001 Volvo S40 with cabin climate controls that weren't just blue and red, but had actual temperature numbers on them - my brother and I loved that.

I was driving home from school extraordinarily tired, and a light at a business park that was always green was, for once, red - but I wasn't looking at it. I didn't even see the giant, bright red, humongous Coca Cola truck coming out of the intersection - I just plowed right into its trailer, smashing my car's front, shattering the windshield, and miraculously leaving me only with a burn on my left thumb from the airbag's deployment.

**The first thing I thought was "Oh man, I am going to be in so much trouble."** I'd just totaled a \$10,000 vehicle, lost our family a means of transportation, and probably upped our insurance costs, and it was all my fault.

But when my mom came around the corner, running out of the family van, I couldn't even get out "I'm so sorry" before she'd enfolded me in her arms, crying (for the first time I could ever remember), making sure I was okay and telling me she loved me.

**I'd been expecting punishment or correction, and instead I got love.**

God is the same. Do you know that, in your heart? God's love is so strong and powerful and eternal, that in John 17:24 Jesus says to the Father, "you loved me before the foundation of the world." Before anything existed, before let there be light, before even time, there was the love of God poured out upon another.

**Love is our highest calling** - Jesus himself said there was no greater commandment than love of God and neighbor. The greatest commandment is to be like our loving God - which sounds crazy, but in reality, it's totally attainable. We were made in the image and likeness of this loving God, which means we have an amazing capacity for love. While sometimes it can "turn," as St. Paul says, inward to the love of self, of attention, of pleasure, of anything besides the communally focused love of God, the Lord always calls and welcomes us back to the right path with mercy and goodness.

In almost the same breath as his astonishing acknowledgement of the Father's love, Jesus also prays for us - "that the love with which You loved me may be in them and I in them" (John 17:26). He prays that we might love like the Father, be included in the love of the Father, and have the love of the Son in us as well.

Take a moment during this Lenten season to pause from your self-reliance, from your pride, from your own ego. **Break down the hard walls of your own heart and let the love of God seep into the cracks and heal you.** In His love, ever-better things are ahead, if we only have the courage to seek them.

The traditional Lenten disciplines of prayer, fasting, and giving are meant to facilitate (to "make easier") this process in our hearts. I encourage you to start today and fully dive into them this Lent and pray more deeply, fast more intentionally, and give more generously while asking the Lord to come into your heart and show you the heart-breaking beauty of His love.

*Megan Arteaga  
Youth Ministry Coordinator*

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## **Weekend Worship Opportunities**

**Sacrament of Reconciliation**  
**Saturday, March 4, 2023**  
**4-4:30pm** | Confessions in the Church

*Please note there will be no Confessions on Saturday, March 18.*

## **The 2nd Sunday of Lent**

**Sunday, March 5, 2023**

**8:30am** | Mass in the Church; also [Livestreamed](#)

**10:30am** | Mass in the Church

**5:00pm** | Youth Mass in the Church

[Click here for the Sunday readings](#)

*Masks covering the nose and mouth are required for those who are not fully vaccinated, and are optional for those who are fully vaccinated.*

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## **Parish Life**

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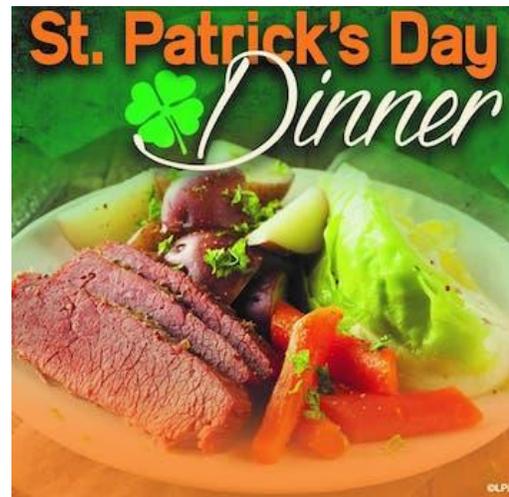
### **NEW: Get tickets for the Knights of Columbus' St. Patrick's Day Dinner!**

On Friday, March 17, the Knights of Columbus will be hosting a Corned Beef and Cabbage dinner in honor of St. Patrick's Day!

#### **St. Patrick's Day Dinner Santa Maria Parish Hall Friday, March 17**

Doors open at 5:30pm

Dinner served at 6:30pm



Bring your family (kids 12 and under eat free!) at \$30 a ticket for a fun night, including a corned beef and cabbage dinner, potatoes, salad, and a drink ticket good for beer, wine, or soft drinks!

Tickets available after the Sunday Masses; contact [Greg Smith](#) for more information.

*Bishop Barber has provided a dispensation from Friday's abstinence from meat; see below for more details.*

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### **THIS SUNDAY: "Mission Stories" book signing with Father Augustine**

This Sunday, we welcome Fr. Augustine Joseph, who will be preaching at the 8:30am and 10:30am Masses.

Father Augustine has written a book titled "Mission Stories," which is an interesting, inspiring, and charming testament to what God can accomplish through missionaries.



Father will be signing (and selling!) copies of his book in the Parish Hall following Masses during "donut time."

[Read Bishop Barber's entertaining description of this book here](#)

## **THIS SUNDAY: Hospitality follows morning Masses in the Parish Hall**

During the book-signing, we'll be offering coffee and donuts in the parish hall!



Stay warm and dry while you enjoy your post-Mass goodies (remember, Sunday is ALWAYS a feast day, never a fast day!) and be enriched in both body and soul with the snacks and book signing with Fr. Augustine.

## **Welcome to the team, Suzanne!**

We are happy to welcome parishioner **Suzanne Wells** to our team as the new Administrative Assistant! Suzanne will be the first voice who answers the phone and the recipient of all emails addressed to our general email.



**Jo Ann Bell** has stepped back from her position as full-time Administrative Assistant, but has requested to be kept "on call" as a backup and sub when needed, so don't worry - nobody's missed any final farewells!

## **Sacristy access limited for refurbishment**

Beginning Monday, February 13, access to the sacristies in the church will be limited for the following 5-7 weeks.

During this time, we will be refurbishing both rooms, including asbestos removal, water damage repair, painting, reflooring, etc. During this time, the room at the far end of the Parish Hall will serve as a temporary sacristy.



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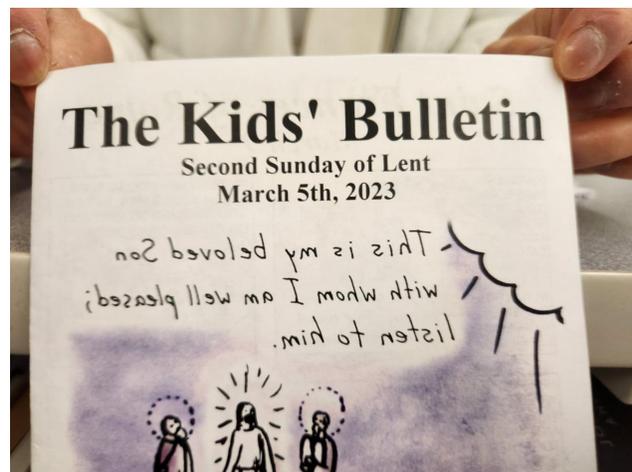
## Prayer and Worship

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**NEW:** Kids - come to CLW this Sunday for a **SECRET MESSAGE!**

All kids from Kindergarten to 4th grade are welcome to join us for Children's Liturgy of the Word at this Sunday's 10:30am Mass!

Join us this week to discover a secret message from God!!



**NEW:** Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament this morning

This Friday is an amazing day - there's morning Mass at 8:30am, after which the Blessed Sacrament will be exposed, we'll pray the Stations of the Cross around 9am, and will close with Benediction at noon!



Come for part or all of this beautiful morning of prayer. (Remember above when Megan challenged you to dive more deeply into prayer this Lent? This is a great way to do so!)

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## The Season of Lent

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## St. Patrick's Day dispensation from Friday abstinence

Please [click here](#) to see the decree granting dispensation from abstinence of meat on the upcoming Feast of Saint Patrick (Friday, March 17).



Bishop has encouraged everyone who makes use of this dispensation to engage in another sacrificial or charitable act that day.

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## Invitation to Thursday Morning Lenten Faith Sharing

On **Thursdays from 9:30am to 10:30am**, join us in the Parish Office or on Zoom for a deep dive into the season of Lent with the resource "Restore:



a Journey of Healing and Restoration" with Sr. Miriam James Heidland, SOLT!

[Click here to watch the First Week of Lent video](#)

Each week throughout Lent, Sr. Miriam will lead you to meet the tenderness of God's mercy, the power of his love, and the restoration of your heart and life as you practice prayer, fasting, almsgiving, and sacrifice.

Want to go the extra mile? Feel free to purchase **Restore: A Guided Lent Journal for Prayer and Meditation** from [Ave Maria Press](#) or [Amazon](#) to guide you through the Lenten journey! It is NOT required for your participation on Thursdays - just an option.

[Email Megan](#) for more details or to receive the Zoom link!

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## Stations of the Cross begin February 24

During Fridays in Lent, we will be praying the Stations of the Cross immediately following Friday

morning Masses. On Good Friday, there will be no morning Stations; instead, the Stations of the Cross will be celebrated at 7:30pm as is our tradition at Santa Maria.



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## Service and Outreach

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### **NEW:** Records broken!

Bay Area temperatures have realize record-breaking lows. The Santa Maria parish community has donated 285 warm coats to the Oakland Catholic Worker, registering an all-time high!

It's as if we knew a cold front was headed our way!

A huge thank-you goes out to all those who responded to the cry for help. We hope your hearts are warmed by helping those in need.



### **NEW:** Bag lunches? It's in the bag!

Thanks to the 16 quick and speedy parishioner volunteers who have covered the need for bag lunches for the next two months!

Our commitment to Oakland Catholic Worker is only fulfilled because of the generosity of people like you in our congregation. Thank you!



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## Food for Thought

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### **NEW:** Harrison Butker opens up about his

## Super Bowl-winning kick - and his prayer routine

A CNA article by  
Jonah McKeown

Even though Harrison Butker kicked the winning field goal in what he described as "one of the best Super Bowls ever played," football doesn't define the Kansas City Chiefs player's life.



"I want to be a saint. And that's the most important thing, and that's why I'm here on this earth," Butker recently told EWTN News In Depth's Colm Flynn.

"I'm not just making kicks so that I can make money and I can puff myself up as this great person that people want to be like one day. I'm making kicks because God wants me to have a platform, at least for right now, to share this message of faith, of growing in virtue, of growing closer to the sacraments and of being a saint." ...[read more](#)

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## Who's that standing next to the Pope?

One of our parishioners sent us this photo, and gave us the challenge to guess - **who's that standing next to the Pope in her First Communion dress?**



For reference: this photo was taken in 1951, and this is Pope Pius XII, and yes - the girl in the First Communion dress currently attends Santa Maria!

We can't wait to see what you all come up with!

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# Good Stewardship

## NEW: January Collection Report

Our Finance Council has determined our monthly goal for the Sunday Plate. Here is our total for last month:

Goal: \$42,000  
**Last Month's Total: \$62,393**  
**Surplus: \$20,393**



## How can I support Santa Maria?

Thank you so much for thinking about us and supporting our parish! We are greatly appreciative of any help you can provide.

You may drop your collection in the offertory baskets at Masses, mail a check to the Parish Office (40 Santa Maria Way, Orinda CA 94563), or [make a one-time donation using Faith Direct](#), our eGiving service, to make your offering.

If you would like, you can also [sign up for recurring giving through Faith Direct](#) to continue to give to the Sunday plate even if you aren't here. Again, we thank you for your planning and your generosity!



## Mass Intentions

### Sunday, March 5

8:30am: The Intentions of Sab and Betty Maggiora

10:30am: Monique Fung †

5:00pm: Parishioners of Santa Maria, Living and Deceased

### Monday, March 6

8:30am: Ana Govednik Rogina †

### Tuesday, March 7

8:30am: John Rogina †

### Wednesday, March 8

8:30am: The Intention of Sr. Mary Margaret, LHC

### Thursday, March 9

8:30am: Josef Govednik †

### Friday, March 10

8:30am: Florence Vitale †

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## Would you like to become a sponsor for our parish bulletin?

We'll share your advertisement (like Ana's, above) each week for a year, and feature your business three times a year in a larger column as well!

**All advertising proceeds go directly to Santa Maria.**

[Contact Megan Arteaga for details](#)

*Mass Intentions are a beautiful way of praying for your intentions or for the souls of our deceased loved ones. To request a Mass Intention, please visit the office during Office Hours.*

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## Pastoral Team

### **Reverend George Mockel**

Pastor  
[gmockel@santamariaorinda.com](mailto:gmockel@santamariaorinda.com)

### **Deacon Rey Encarnacion**

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x301

### **Deacon James Pearce**

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### **Megan Arteaga**

Youth Ministry (Grades 6-12),  
Communications, and CYO  
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### **Helena Dietrich**

Music Ministry  
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### **Sister Mary Magdalene Nguyen, LHC**

Pastoral Care of the Sick  
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### **Sister Mary Margaret Phan, LHC**

Faith Formation (Grades K-5)  
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### **Suzanne Wells**

Administrative Assistant  
[swells@santamariaorinda.com](mailto:swells@santamariaorinda.com) x301

## Prayer Intentions

### *For the Sick:*

Mary Beth Alban, Avery Ann, Joan Artmann, Shoaib Aryan, Patricia Bartholomeu, Kristy Blackey-Taylor, Miguel Briseno, Jeff Calder, Maria Carmen, Fred Chavaria, Judy Eben, Lorna Elliott, Anne Emery, Matthew Ennis, Nora Enriquez, Anthony Fisher, Emidio Fonseca, Liam Foley, Patricia Fox, Bridget Gallagher, Gregory Ibabao, Shirley Jones, Brian Kelly, Mason Kelly, Jim Kennedy, Jerry Kirk, Lawrence Knapp, Carol Koupus, Rose Mary McPhee, Jim M., Maria Elsa Moya, Robert Nick, Chase O'Keefe, Arsi Orihuella, Deacon Jim Pearce, Kathleen Pelz, Ann Powell, Mark Ricci, Ben Richey, Carl Robinson, Ustrula Simmons, Steve Turner, Faye Young

### *For the Dead:*

Chuck Kovely †, Daniel Mein †, Jean Wells †

*Would you like to add yourself or someone else to the prayer list? Please ensure you have their permission, then [contact Megan in the Parish Office.](#)*

*Likewise, thanks be to God for those for whom prayer has been answered! If you would like to be removed from the prayer list with gratitude for answered prayer, please let Megan know that as well.*

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Maria**

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