



LUMEN CHRISTI

Issue 5 • March 2020

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CATHEDRAL OF CHRIST THE LIGHT



Why do we wear “pink”
on the 4th Sunday of Lent?
This Roman basilica helps
us understand why!

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Notice from the Rector regarding Coronavirus

As the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and the Center for Disease Control (CDC) continue to expect an outbreak of coronavirus (COVID-19) in the West Coast of the United States in the near future, I am issuing the following practical directive to mitigate the spread of this disease in our local community.

If you are sick, please stay home. I advise you not to visit public places like the Cathedral, where the risk of spreading contagious illnesses are much higher. Moreover, as Cathedral Rector, I find that the risk of a COVID-19 outbreak in our area constitutes just cause for the dispensation of the Sunday obligation for those who are sick or who may become sick. **Pursuant to Canon 1245 of the Code of Canon Law, I hereby dispense parishioners who are ill, who feel ill, or who may become ill from the obligation of attending Mass on Sundays. I likewise dispense all parishioners traveling to or traveling from areas already affected by an outbreak of coronavirus.**

This dispensation is in effect until further notice. In the meantime, I urge all the faithful to practice good hygiene, to heed directions from healthcare providers, to avoid unnecessary travel to affected areas, and above all to pray. Please pray for all those who have contracted the illness, for the health care professionals working to fight its spread, and for the continued good health of those who have not yet been infected.



The Very Rev. Brandon E. Macadaeg
Rector



LUMEN CHRISTI

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE CATHEDRAL
OF CHRIST THE LIGHT



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Staff Voices

FROM THE PARISH STAFF

Dear Friends,

Thanks to all who participated in the Parish-wide survey. The additional comments which many of you left also helped us to understand what you love about the Cathedral of Christ the Light. Your feedback is greatly appreciated by the entire Cathedral Staff.

As many of you know, one of Fr. Brandon's priorities for the Cathedral is to foster the unity of the Parish, centered on a well-celebrated, solemn Sunday Mass. The questions on the survey were intended to help us understand what people love about the Cathedral and what inspires them to keep coming back every Sunday. We asked questions about liturgical music, quality of preaching, adequate time for recreation, hospitality, and availability of parking to get a sense of how these things affect your decision to come worship in this community.

While the results of the survey, including samples of the written comments, are given in more detail later in the following pages, we can note some general trends. The overwhelming majority of respondents come to the Cathedral in search of reverent Masses, good preaching, and solid liturgical music. The availability of parking, hospitality, ample time for recreation, and the Bishop's presence are all still important to a majority of respondents, but decidedly less important than reverent Masses, good music, and strong preaching.

For the sake of transparency, this issue of *Lumen Christi* also talks about Parish finances (page 9). **In 2020, we are expected to operate at a deficit of around \$13,000.** This is not an insurmountable hurdle; in fact, it represents a drastically smaller deficit when compared to past years. The bottom line is that the Parish is continuing to improve its finances, close its debts, and work toward operating at a surplus in the years to come. Much of our financial improvement in recent years is due directly to your generosity and stewardship of resources; both the Bishop and the Rector cannot thank you enough for your material and prayerful support.

As we look to strengthen the unity of the Parish while practicing proactive stewardship of its material resources, Fr. Brandon and the Staff have decided to implement a change in the Sunday Mass schedule. **The Saturday evening Mass will be moved to 5:00 PM. The 10:00 AM and 12:00 noon Masses in English will be consolidated into a single Mass at 11:00 AM, with the first 11AM Mass being offered on Palm Sunday (April 5, 2020). The Spanish Mass is moved to 1:30 PM.**

The consolidation of the two best-attended Sunday Masses will help to ensure that the majority of our Sunday parishioners get the best preaching, the best music, and the best liturgy that the Cathedral can offer. It ensures that the principal Mass at the Cathedral is truly the center of the Sunday experience, while allowing parishioners ample time to spend the Lord's day with families. It consolidates the

resources expended for the ministries for each Mass. Most importantly, it consolidates the community by bringing more parishioners to the same Mass. An authentic faith community can grow only in the unity of prayer. The celebration of the new 11:00 AM Sunday Mass will go a long way in fostering the sense of community with our brothers and sisters in the Parish.

The consolidation of Masses will certainly affect parking. For this reason, the Cathedral will continue to pay for Sunday parking, both in the Cathedral lot and the Kaiser lot, at no cost to the parishioner. This is an investment by the Parish in the Cathedral community, to ensure that all our parishioners who drive to Mass will continue to have access to parking.

Many of you have already made offerings for Mass intentions at Masses affected by the consolidation. Please know that intentions already received for 10:00 AM and 12:00 noon Masses will be honored. In accordance with Article 2 of the Decree on Mass Stipends from the Congregation for the Clergy (dated February 22, 1991), **this message serves as public notice that the intentions already accepted for these Masses will be honored and offered as collective intentions at the 11AM Sunday Mass, unless one or both donors contact the Cathedral Office and ask to have their intention removed.** Note that the offering of these collective intentions in accord with the 1991 Decree constitutes a **limited and permissible exception to Canon 948.** Accepting only one intention per Mass remains the general law of the Church and will continue to be standard practice at the Cathedral.

We hope that you will welcome these new changes as an opportunity to deepen your Sunday Mass experience, to strengthen the bond of charity with fellow parishioners, and to participate in the continued growth of the Cathedral. While we know that there will always be some resistance to change, we believe that the new Sunday Mass schedule will bear much fruit for you and for the Cathedral at large.

May God continue to bless us all as the Cathedral Parish community grows closer to Christ, the Light of the World.

NEW SUNDAY MASS SCHEDULE

Effective PALM SUNDAY (April 5, 2020)

8:00 AM (Vietnamese)

11:00 AM (English)

1:30 PM (Spanish)



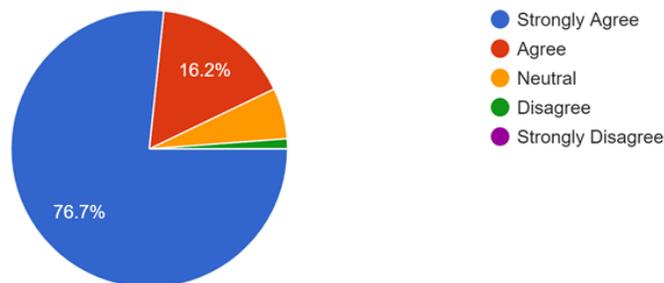
THE CATHEDRAL OF
CHRIST THE LIGHT

Survey Results

Parish Survey Results

The graphs on the following pages show the total percentage results for questions 1-7 on the Parish Survey. All data, whether submitted online or on paper, was consolidated to produce the results shown here. Due to the sheer volume of responses to question 8 (“Is there anything else you’d like to add about your Sunday experience at the Cathedral?”), in addition to the many written comments we’ve received on the paper surveys, we cannot reproduce all those responses here. Instead, after each graph, you will find a few sample comments relevant to each question that shows the variety of the types of responses received. **As far as possible, all written comments are transcribed as they were sent (including typos, punctuation, smiley faces, etc.), in order to present the data as we received them.**

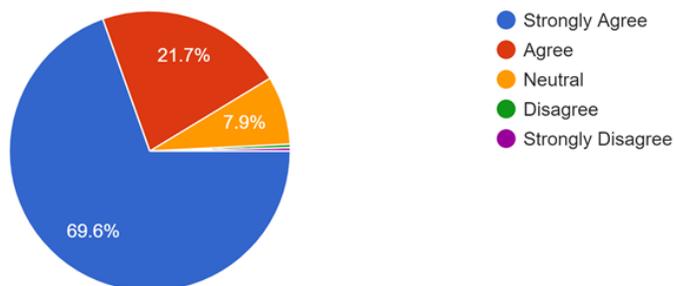
1. Beauty and reverence in the Sacred Liturgy are important to me.
253 responses



Sample responses:

- “Bring back more of the beauty found in Tridentine Masses. The beauty that truly draws people to the the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Beauty and reverence, I believe, will help with the issue of people not believing in the Real Presence.”
- “The formality of the liturgy is superseding the mission of making Christ known in our modern age, in a modern building with antiquated processions, pomp and needless formality.”

The quality of preaching (homilies) at Sunday Masses influences my desire to attend Masses at the Cathedral.
3 responses



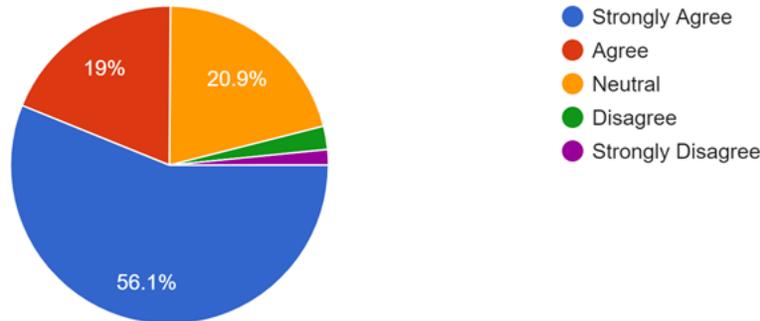
Sample responses:

- “Father Brandon’s homilies are great, I often find myself framing my weeks by his messages. They’re both reflective and offer inspiration going forward.”
- “Homilies must be bible based not personal priests’ stories”
- “It will be nice if it is more relatable. ‘Humaness’ instead of theology.”
- “Specifically homilies of Fr. Brandon + Deacon Tim - they’re a big reason we go to the Cathedral!!!”

Survey Results

3. The presence of the Bishop at certain Masses, especially on major feasts, influences my desire to visit the Cathedral.

253 responses

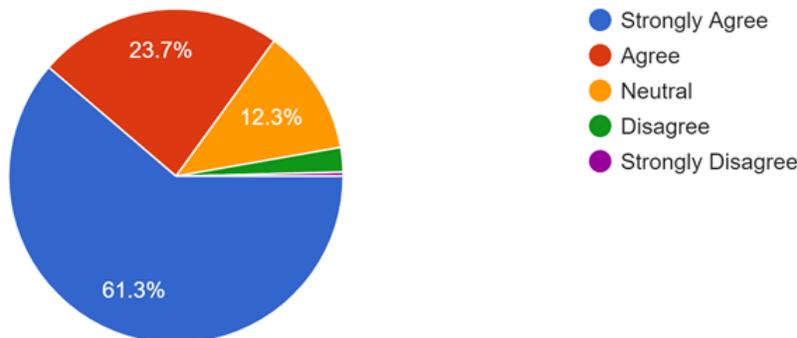


Sample responses:

- "The Bishop is always appreciated and adds a welcomed presence. Father Bandon is more than capable in his absence."
- "the presence of the Bishop would be greatly appreciated"
- "I would suggest if the Bishop can preside a Mass in the Cathedral once a month it would be highly appreciated. Thank you"
- "The Bishop is seldom present for the 10 a.m. Mass on Sundays. It would be wonderful if he could be there more often."

4. In the Sacred Liturgy, I prefer music that uplifts the soul AND is distinct from ordinary secular music.

253 responses



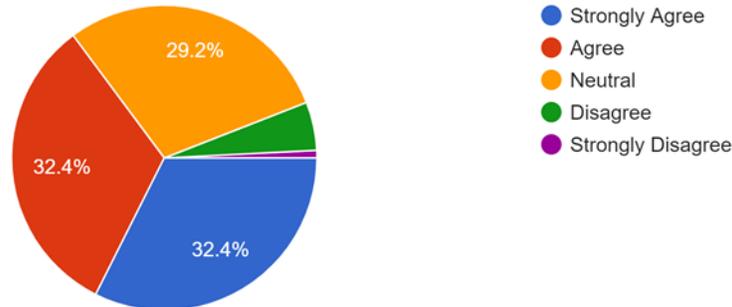
Sample responses:

- "Excellent the way it is. A high level of musicianship; especially the two organists!"
- "The organ music is kinda morbid sounding and it is hard to follow along in the singing when it seems the choir high pitched singing."
- "music that uplifts the soul *AND* distinct from ordinary secular music is very important"
- "[Suggestion]: Traditional music with organ and Latin Chant, no piano."
- "we love the music and the relaxing atmosphere"
- "The choir, organ, and acoustics of this building are AMAZING and really contribute to the beauty of mass."
- "love the music but *less* chanting would be great."
- "Sometimes the organ is too loud!"
- "music at the cathedral is Beautiful and the Best in any church I've been!"

Survey Results

5. Hospitality and opportunities for socializing with other parishioners after Mass are important parts of my Sunday experience.

253 responses

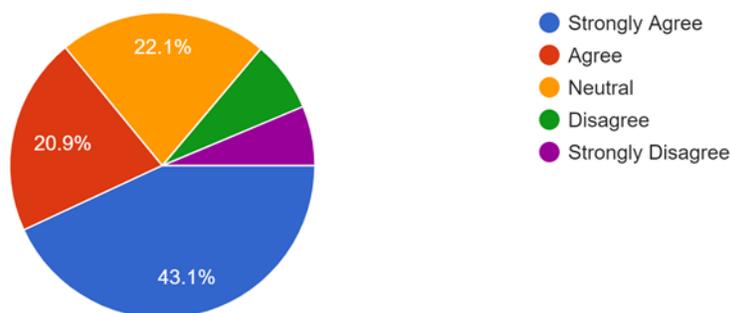


Sample responses:

- "Healthier options [for hospitality] would be nice :) "
- "But I don't feel like we really do [hospitality and socializing] here. We need more personal interaction with each other."
- "Welcoming when you enter mass and at hospitality is important. People need to feel that they are noticed. Also, the liturgy is the most important part of the Sunday experience, but it should be a door through which people's spirituality can grow, the beginning not the end of the Sunday experience."
- "Grandkids love the donuts :) "
- "I'd like to see more activities that go beyond donuts & coffee at fellowships after Mass--activities that facilitate the discussion of living out the weekly gospel in our daily lives."

6. Access to free parking affects my decision to attend Masses at the Cathedral.

253 responses



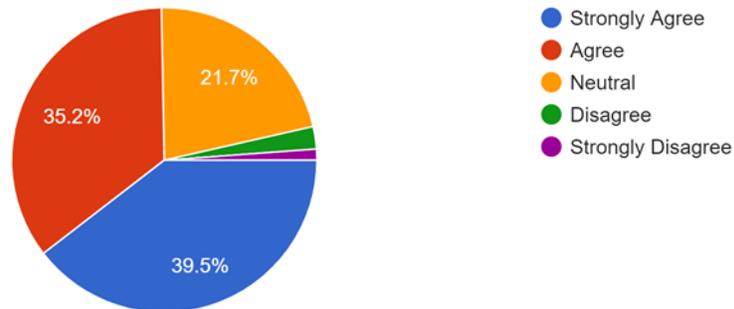
Sample responses:

- "Please improve access to parking spaces. And ensure 10am/12pm Masses are able to use the lot."
- "charge at least \$1.00 [for parking]"
- "I feel that his place should be free parking for those who visit their loved ones at the mausoleum"
- "Q6/Strongly Disagree (Parking)-- There is unlimited parking on the nearby streets on Sunday morning."
- "free parking would be ideal. But paid parking rates and time limits should be clear upon entering-- something on paper to refer to"

Survey Results

7. Ample time for recreation and family time, especially in the afternoon and evening, is an important part of my Sunday.

253 responses



No written comments found for question 7

Other general responses to the survey:

- "Thank you for beautiful Masses every week. The choir rocks!"
- "Sunday 10am mass at the cathedral feels very distinctly Catholic to me; very distinct from other church services. I love the reverence of the ceremony (e.g. use of incense, traditional chanting, and order of ceremonies). This sets mass at the cathedral apart from many other churches which often feel like they are going through the motions. This is a huge reason I attend mass here regularly. The other reason is the music."
- "The 10 AM is very reverent, but the cathedral should offer the TLM or at least novus ordo in Latin, ad orientem."
- "Less relevance to Latin content in mass. Need to modernize mass to make it more relevant to life today and appeal to a younger congregation. The future of the Catholic Church should not be anchored to it's past"
- "More traditional values and practices such as priest wearing cassock and biretta; orthodox teaching are refreshing and appreciated! Current rector and parochial vicar are much more reverential and proper! More use of Latin is renewing the liturgy, both in English and Spanish. Traditional Latin Mass would revitalize the Faith!"
- "Perhaps there is the possibility of offering more social outreach as a parish community. In what ways can we, as a parish, signify 'Christ the Light' to those around us? Related to question #5, perhaps a better question could be: 'What could we offer the surrounding Oakland community that would provide for opportunities for socializing in addition to meeting the community's social needs.'"
- "How to get more parishioners to help and volunteer as Lectors, Ministers or ushers"
- "I very much appreciate the beautiful magazine Lumen Christi and the special attention devoted to writing about the liturgical season and particular feast days."
- "Child care would be nice. The musicians are very nice"
- "Enjoy homilys that include personal stories that are relatable to us in our world today, like Fr. Wayne shares as well as Fr. Brandon. Thank you for giving us this chance to add our voice!"
- "Fr. Brandon has been a great addition to our community. He is in part the reason why I continue to attend mass here. Keep up the good work."

Report on Parish Finances

Dear fellow parishioners,

Our newly formed finance council worked with Fr. Brandon and his Parish Staff to prepare the Annual Financial Report for Fiscal Year 2019. By this letter, we intend to introduce that report and provide context around some of the key challenges and highlights we encountered during the year. We have also included a few points related to the newly approved Fiscal Year 2020 budget.

Over 90% of the income that supports our Cathedral Parish and its activities comes from the collections and donations given by its parishioners. This is our parish, consecrated by the Holy Spirit, and under the leadership of Fr. Brandon, but inextricably tied to each person that seeks grace, community, or refuge within our walls. The finance council is committed to the transparency that will help us all recognize that our parish is not an "it" or a "they," but an "us."

During FY 2019, parish income was **90.5%** of our projected goal of **\$539,900**; net income was **\$488,845.48** compared to our target of **\$542,800** (\$2,900 above breakeven). A few specific challenges we faced during the year were related to the sudden death of our previous rector, Fr. Jay Matthews, in April of last year. His death resulted in some uncertainty and lack of continuity until the arrival of Fr. Brandon in July. In the interim, the parish relied on outside clergy to minister the sacraments. The combined effect over the period was a decrease in collections and an increase in personnel-related expenses.

Other income-related challenges included reduced participation in special collections, the need for better billing policies around special events (e.g., weddings), and the broader trend of decreased mass attendance and collections faced by many churches in the region. Other cost-related challenges included overages on printing/parish supplies, high rent costs, and high personnel costs (both lay and clerical).

Income-related highlights for the year include higher than expected one-time gifts, donations to the flowers/church upkeep/votive candles, and collections on holy days. On the cost side, there was a decrease in the rector's salary and benefits related to the April through July period during which there was no acting rector.

In light of the financial difficulties in FY 2019 and a commitment to balancing the budget, the parish has taken several steps to reduce costs, most notably through the difficult step of reducing our Parish Staff. Several additional initiatives related to both our facilities and our schedule of events at the parish have been considered. **Even so, we**

project a net loss of \$13,000 for Fiscal Year 2020, the result of a balanced approach to reduce costs without compromising the quality of our ministry. Our hope is to reach breakeven and cash flow positivity over the next twelve months, which will then allow us to invest in new initiatives.

As we look forward, we do so with keen awareness of both the responsibility and opportunity inherent to our position as the Cathedral Parish. Fr. Brandon and his team will communicate a strategy for the parish that begins with an emphasis on fostering community and mission at both the Sunday and weekday masses. To that end, we have hired a new communications manager for the parish who will help shape that strategy and facilitate outreach to those within our parish boundaries and to the greater diocese. It is our prayer and conviction that God's plans for our parish will be realized through the involvement of each of our members. We ask that you prayerfully consider how your prayers, time, and financial contributions can contribute to building Christ's kingdom on earth and make our parish and diocese a shining source of grace and renewal for all those in the East Bay.

Humbly yours,
Brian Williams

Chairman, Cathedral Finance Council

CATHEDRAL PARISH OF CHRIST THE LIGHT ANNUAL PARISH FINANCIAL REPORT FOR 2019

<u>INCOME</u>	
Sunday & Holy Day Collections	\$ 287,960.72
Weekday Collection	\$ 9,996.86
Easter Collection	\$ 22,269.86
Christmas Collection	\$ 22,861.87
Catholic Voice Collection	\$ 2,776.38
Parish Ministries	\$ 19,291.44
Gifts	\$ 13,599.23
Cathedral Visitor Donations	\$ 1,525.66
Bishop's Appeal Rebate	\$ 26,453.14
Sacraments, Funeral, Faith Formation	\$ 50,104.03
Other Income	\$ 32,006.29
Includes funds from flower donations, votive candles, etc.	
Total Operating Income	\$ 488,845.48
<u>EXPENSE</u>	
Administrative	\$ 425,878.22
Rector's Living	\$ 3,010.44
Priest Supply	\$ 123,689.09
Liturgy Ministry	\$ 17,665.95
Music Ministry	\$ 20,713.43
Faith Formation/Sacraments/RCIA	\$ 26,975.87
Other Ministries/Parking	\$ 22,307.20
Total Operating Expenses	\$ 640,240.20
Net Operating Income	\$ -153,394.72

Thank you for all of your continued generosity.

Cathedral Events

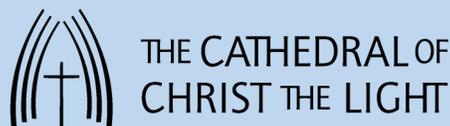
Is it time to reconnect with your Catholic Faith after being away?

“Landings” is a 10-week ministry program that offers a chance to learn, to tell your story and grow your connection to God and the church if you have been away some time. Whether you stopped going to church months or years ago, or just feel disconnected, Landings welcomes you. We hold discussion-based sessions that are for listening and for being heard - for asking questions and finding answers. If you are called to participate in this ministry we are interested in hearing for you. Contact us at jwither Spoon@cfcsoakland.org.



Chorus Spring Concert: Passover & Eastertide

The Oakland Symphony Chorus under the direction of Dr. Lynne Morrow is happy to announce this year's Spring Concert, "Passover & Eastertide," to be performed at the Cathedral of Christ the Light on **April 18, 2020 at 8pm**. Continue your celebration of the Paschal Mystery at this wonderful concert! For more information, please visit: oaklandsymphony.org



DIOCESAN EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS

JUNE 21-22, 2020



On the initiative of Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ, the Cathedral of Christ the Light will host a Diocesan Eucharistic Congress. All are welcome to this faith-filled, prayerful event in honor of our Lord's Sacramental Presence featuring inspiring keynote addresses in English & Spanish, a Eucharistic Procession through downtown Oakland, and Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.

Cathedral Events



Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ, warmly invites the faithful of the Diocese of Oakland, especially all priests, representatives of parishes, and RCIA candidates, to join him in the celebration of

The Diocesan Chrism Mass

Thursday, April 2, 2020

6:30 PM

at the Cathedral of Christ the Light

Come witness the Consecration of the Sacred Chrism, the blessing of the Oils of the Sick and of Catechumens, the Rite of Election for Candidates to the Priesthood, and the formal Dismissal of RCIA Candidates prior to their full initiation at the Easter Vigil. All are welcome!

For more information, please visit the website at:

ctlcathedral.org/chrism2020

THE CATHEDRAL OF CHRIST THE LIGHT Holy Week & Triduum Schedule

Palm Sunday
April 5

8:00am
Vietnamese Mass

11:00am
Solemn Mass
Bishop Michael Barber, SJ
presiding

1:30am
Spanish Mass

Holy Thursday
April 9

11:00am-12:00n
Confessions

7:00pm
Solemn Mass
of the Lord's Supper
Bishop Michael Barber, SJ
presiding

Good Friday
April 10

12:00n
Stations of the Cross

3:00pm
Solemn Liturgy
of Good Friday
Bishop Michael Barber, SJ
presiding

Holy Saturday
April 11

8:00pm
Solemn Easter Vigil
Mass

Lux Vera



Thanks to Ray & Eve Galka (both in sunglasses) for this photo of our parishioners who were confirmed by Bishop Barber on Saturday, February 15, here at the Cathedral! From left to right: Thien Chau, John Proctor, Marijane Castillo, Melissa Villareal, and Edward Vaccaro. Please pray for our newly confirmed brothers and sisters!

Please join us for

Stations of the Cross

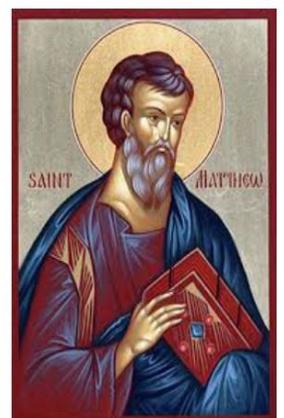
every Wednesday in Lent

immediately after the 12:10pm Mass

Come enter more deeply into the spirit of Lent by contemplating the Passion and Death of our Lord through this traditional Catholic devotion. Spend a brief section of your lunch hour reflecting on God's great mercy and love for all of us.

Lenten Bible Study

Enrich your Lenten experience by joining us in a study of the second half of Matthew's Gospel. We will witness the Transfiguration, travel with Jesus and His disciples to Jerusalem where He will teach with authority, be increasingly challenged by the religious leaders, suffer, die and rise from the dead. Finally, the risen Jesus will commission His followers to "make disciples of all nations".



We hear Matthew's Gospel at mass throughout this year. Enrich your Sunday experience with us as we study Matthew's Gospel.

The five part series will begin on Monday, February 24. We meet in the Vietnamese Martyrs Conference room just past the Parish Hall from 6:30 until 8:00 PM.

Cost for materials for the session will be \$10.00

LUX VERA MEDITATIONS, MUSINGS, & MISCELLANEA FOR THE MONTH

featuring reflections on:

St. Patrick • St. Joseph • Why is “pink” a liturgical color? • Notes on Stewardship • *and more*

“...*Erat lux vera quae inluminat omnem hominem venientem in mundum.*” (Joan. I, ix-x)

“...*He was the true light which enlightens all who come into this world.*”
(John 1:9-10)

March 17: Saint Patrick of Ireland

From the Martyrology:

In the city of Down in Ireland, the heavenly birth (i.e., earthly death) of Saint Patrick, bishop and confessor, who first announced Christ to that island, and who shone with the greatest miracles and virtues.

Many legendary stories told about Saint Patrick of Ireland, even in Catholic circles, has little basis in history and often fails to do justice to the real man and his intense love for the Church. Patrick did not, as many may tell you, expel the snakes from Ireland, and nor did he use the shamrock to help the brute Irish understand the Holy Trinity.

Most of what we know about St. Patrick is written by his own hand in the Latin language. Ethnically, he was a Briton, but culturally, he was Roman to the core. Among the most valuable and extant sources we have are his Last Testament (*Confessio*) and his “Letter to the Christians under the tyrant Coroticus” (*Epistola*). Rich with Scriptural references and rhetorical flourish, Patrick’s works are the fruits of a well-trained priest, despite his humble self-description as an uneducated sinner (*peccator indoctus*). The latter work (*Epistola*) is a very strong and bitter condemnation (really, an excommunication) of a certain Coroticus, a noble Briton, who had taken Irish Christians into slavery. This harsh letter got the future saint into some trouble, and this is likely one of many reasons he was often brought to prison (*persecutionis multas usque ad vincula*), as mentioned in the *Confessio*.

The Martyrology calls Patrick “bishop and confessor”: not only was he a successor of the Apostles, but he also suffered greatly for the faith. We find references to his episcopacy in both the *Confessio* and the *Epistola*:

It was while I was there [in Britain] that I saw, in a dream a man coming from Ireland, whose name was Victoricus with innumerable letters. He gave me one of these, and I read the heading of the letter, which read “the voice of the Irish” (*Vox Hyberionacum*)... Thanks be to God, after many years the Lord granted this to them, according to their cries. (*Confessio*)

This “Victoricus” is very likely Saint Victricius, Bishop of Rouen, who had also gone to Ireland before Patrick.

I, Patrick, am an educated sinner, yet in Ireland established as bishop. I acknowledge that I have received from God everything I am. (*Epistola*)

Lux Vera

A confessor is not merely a man who suffers, but one who suffers for professing the faith of the Apostles, and Patrick's profession is wonderfully sophisticated, nuanced, and profound. This is most clearly seen towards the beginning of the *Confessio*, where Patrick writes his synthesis of Christian beliefs (a creed), which I produce translated into English.

...there is no other God, neither prior nor after, except God the Father ungenerated, the one without beginning, from whom is every beginning, who holds all things, as we say: and in his Son Jesus Christ, who with the Father we testify has always been, before the beginning of time, in a spiritual way unto the Father. He was begotten ineffably (*inenarrabiliter genitum*) before every beginning, and through him were made the visible and invisible. Becoming man and conquering death (*hominem factum, morte devicta*), he was received by the Father in heaven. The Father gave him all power over every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven, on earth, and in the netherworld, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord and God, and we believe and await his coming in the near future as judge of the living and the dead, who will judge each according to his deeds (*qui reddet unicuique secundum facta sua*), and who has poured on us the Holy Spirit, the gift and promise of immortality, who makes the believers and the obedient to be sons of God and co-heirs of Christ. This we confess and worship, one God in a trinity of the sacred name (*confitemur et adoramus unum Deum in Trinitate sacri nominis*).

It doesn't take a form critic to notice the parallels to the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed. In addition, we see the references to Paul's letters to the Philippians, to the Romans, to Titus, the Acts of the Apostles, and the Gospel of John. We know, therefore, that Patrick was well versed not only in Scripture, but also in the dogmatic controversies which plagued the first five centuries, for the language of his creed is firmly founded in the earliest Patristic texts. Like many saints of those early ages, he too had to wrestle with the temptations of polytheistic paganism, to fight accusations that the Trinitarian doctrine was itself a polytheism, and in a general sense protect the faith in "one God in a Trinity of the sacred name."

The Shamrock—a terrible Trinitarian analogy

The earliest written evidence we have of the story in which Patrick uses a shamrock to teach the Irish about the Trinity comes from a 17th century hagiographical work called *Acta Triadis Thautamurgae* ("Acts of the Wonderworking Triad") which described the lives of St. Patrick, St. Brigid, and St. Columba. Published by a Franciscan named John Colgan in 1647, it is hardly an accurate biography. Thomas Dineley, an Englishman who traveled to Ireland in the 17th century gives us another connection between Paddy's Day and the shamrock. The association of St. Patrick's Day with the shamrock was virtually unknown until very late in history.

The 17th day of March yearly is St Patricks, an immoveable feast, when ye Irish of all stations and condicions wear crosses in their hatts, some of pinns, some of green ribbon, and the vulgar superstitiously wear shamroges, 3 leav'd grass, which they likewise eat (they say) to cause a sweet breath. (Dineley, 1681)

From his firsthand account, Dineley finds the shamrock associated with the "vulgar" and "superstitious, not with the true celebration of the Apostle to Ireland! How can what Dineley called "3 leav'd grass" and what we today call "three-leaf clover" function as an analogy of the Trinity? As Patrick and all the ancient Church Fathers understood it, between the Persons (*hypostases*) of the Trinity there is distinction but no separation. Yet, in the "three-leaf clover," the leaves are in fact separate from each other! This is why the shamrock is, in fact, a terribly inadequate analogy for the Holy Trinity. From such a comparison can arise two erroneous tendencies: tritheism and partialism. Tritheism conceives of the three Trinitarian persons as three distinct gods, while partialism would consider the each person as one-third of the one Godhead. Both, obviously, are absurd and contrary to the ineffable understanding of the Trinity which comes by grace to the heart of the believer.

Patrick himself does not expend much effort into delivering detailed treatises on the Trinity to the Irish— his primary goal was to bring them the Sacraments. Furthermore, no ancient source corroborates the shamrock story, and it seems that all Christendom was largely silent on the issue until the *Acta Triadis Thaumaturgae* hit the printing press in 1647. Surely, initiation into the Church meant acceptance of the God who is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, but there is nothing in Patrick's authentic writings to suggest any more difficulty in teaching this doctrine to the Irish than to any other unevangelized people of the time, to the point that the Saint needed to avail himself of a totally inapt comparison.

Perhaps Patrick's silence about preaching the details of the Trinity point to the fact that Trinitarian theology is largely apophatic. Indeed, the great dogmatic definitions arose as negations, as condemnations of heterodox proposals raised by those who tried to apply logical constraints on God. The Trinity, by its mysterious and uncreated nature, cannot be brought down and encapsulated in the neat categories of the created order. (For example, God is not like a shamrock— God is simply the Triune!)

Instead, on the positive side, we should, as did Patrick and all the holy Church Fathers before him, remain content with the basic formula which underlies Patrick's Creed, the Nicene Creed, the Apostles Creed, and all other acts of faith: "I believe in One God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit— one God in a Trinity of the sacred name. Amen." • J.B.

March 19: Saint Joseph



Celebration of St. Joseph, spouse of the Virgin, on March 19 was already widespread throughout Western Europe circa 900 AD, although commemoration of Joseph is certainly more ancient. By the fifteenth century, this date was firmly established as Joseph's feast in Rome. The Roman Missal promulgated by Pius V in 1570 in accordance with the Council of Trent extended the feast to the Universal Church. On the Feast of the Immaculate Conception 1872, after receiving petitions from the whole Catholic world, Pope Pius IX declared St. Joseph the Patron of the Universal Church through a decree of the Congregation of Rites (*Quemadmodum*

Deus), and thus in the Martyrology for 19 March we see:

In Judah, the birth of Saint Joseph, spouse of the most blessed Virgin Mary, and Confessor; the Supreme Pontiff Pius IX, approving the requests of the entire Catholic world, declared him the Patron of the Universal Church.

In 1962, when the entire Roman Rite only still had one Eucharistic Prayer, Pope John XXIII amended the Roman Canon's first memorial of the saints (*Communicantes*) by adding the phrase *sed et beati Ioseph, eiusdem Virginis sponsi* after mention of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

In one of the last acts of his Pontificate, Benedict XVI approved the request of many faithful that his baptismal namesake be inserted into all Eucharistic Prayers; since this decree was not promulgated (published in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*) before the resignation, the decision had to wait for the next Pope's signature. On May 1, 2013 (Feast of St. Joseph the Worker), the decree of the Congregation for Divine Worship was approved by Pope Francis and published in the *AAS*.

While veneration of the Blessed Mother was always a perennial devotion of the Church, it is only in the last few centuries that the Church has come to appreciate Saint Joseph as Defender of the Church, to the point that today, we invoke his protection in every single Mass during the Eucharistic prayer. Why did Pius IX see fit to give Christ's earthly father this distinguished title, and why has the Church continued to develop this devotion?

We begin with St. Joseph's namesake, the Patriarch Joseph, son of Jacob. We know that in the Old Testament, Joseph had Jacob's favor, for which Joseph received from his father a splendid robe that made the other brothers jealous. After beating him up and tearing his robe, the brothers sold him to some Ishmaelites, who took him to Egypt as slave of Potiphar, captain of Pharaoh's guard. While in captivity, Joseph earned a reputation for accurately interpreting dreams such that even Pharaoh asked his advice. Joseph deciphered Pharaoh's dream—signifying seven years of bounty followed by seven years of famine—and for his services, he was made vizier of Egypt. When the same famine struck Canaan, Joseph's brothers traveled to Egypt to beg for help, ironically from the vizier whom they failed to recognize. In short, after playing a prank on them, Joseph revealed his identity, forgave his brothers, and secured a spot for the house of Israel in Egypt's abundance. He became the guardian and protector of Israel, and only upon his death would the Hebrews be thrust into slavery (“then came a pharaoh who knew not Joseph” —Exodus 1:8).

As almighty God appointed Joseph, son of the patriarch Jacob, over all the land of Egypt to save grain for the people, so when the fullness of time had come and He was about to send to earth His only-begotten Son, the Savior of the world, He chose another Joseph, of whom the first had been the type, and He made him the lord and chief of His household and possessions, the guardian of His choicest treasures. (*Quemadmodum Deus*, Sacred Congregation of Rites)

Lux Vera

Joseph, spouse of the Virgin, also received dreams just like his namesake. First, upon learning that Mary was with child, he thought of dismissing her in secret that she might not be shamed, but an angel of the Lord came to him in a dream and consoled him; he did as the angel commanded. Next, after Christ's birth, Joseph once more saw God's messenger, who warned him of Herod's plan to massacre the innocent sons of Bethlehem. Obeying the message, he took Mary and Jesus into Egypt; there the Holy Family remained until Herod died, returning thereafter to the land of Israel (as did the Hebrews), "that what the Lord had said through the prophet might be fulfilled, 'Out of Egypt I called my son'" (Matthew 2:8, cf. Hosea 11:1)

In all these events, Joseph was made "the guardian of God's choicest treasures"—the Word made flesh and the virgin blessed among all women. Under his protection, Christ and Mary enjoyed a stable home and the young Messiah "grew in wisdom and favor of the Lord." Mary is often depicted as a type (or figure) of the Church since both carry the mystery of Christ into the world; ancient Israel, too, was seen by the earliest Fathers (and even the evangelist Matthew!) as a type of the Church. The twelve Apostles, that primitive ecclesial community, signified the consummation of the sons of Jacob and the tribes of Israel. The two Josephs, therefore functioned as the closest protectors of both ancient Israel and the ancient Church, and how right and just it is that St. Joseph, the perfection of the patriarch Joseph, be venerated as Patron of the Church! Wherefore today we shirk our Lenten violet and wear solemn white and gold, in glad thanksgiving for the life of Joseph, exemplar father and husband, most chaste spouse of the Blessed Virgin, and protector of the Universal Church. • J.B.

March 22: Laetare Sunday

Though this post is not an *apologia* for the Extraordinary Form in the strict sense, it will offer a glimpse as to why understanding the traditions of the Church, especially the ancient liturgy, is an absolute must for Catholics who wish to know their own heritage.

The fourth Sunday of Lent is commonly known as "Laetare Sunday". On this day, the average churchgoing Catholic may be accustomed to the use of "pink" as a liturgical color. Really, this color is not pink, but rose (*rosaceo*, "rose-like" in Latin); this distinction is important, as we will see. In a vestment of true rosacea, the base color of the fabric is actually a vibrant shade of red, like that of rose petals; however, subtle threads of white or silver are interwoven into the vestment's embroidered patterns such that from a distance, the hue of red appears much lighter (more like a sunset color than baby pink). The day takes the name *laetare* ("rejoice!") from the Introit chant (or "Entrance Antiphon") of the Mass in the Extraordinary Form, which was preserved in the Novus Ordo. The text of the introit is taken from Isaiah 66:10 and Psalm 22:1, and runs as follows:

Laetare, Jerusalem, et conventum facite omnes qui diligitis eam; gaudete cum laetitia, qui in tristitia fuistis, ut exsultetis, et satiemini ab uberibus consolationis vestrae. Laetatus sum in his quae dicta sunt mihi: in domum Domini ibimus!

Rejoice, Jerusalem, and assemble, all you that love her; rejoice with joy, you who were in sadness, that you may exult be filled from the breasts of your consolation. I rejoiced when they said unto me: let us go to the house of the Lord!

Like it's analogous counterpart in Advent, Gaudete Sunday (*gaudete* is another word for "rejoice"; taken from the introit "Rejoice in the Lord always..."), the mood of the day is festive, a sharp contrast with the sobriety of penitential seasons. Yet this joyfulness shared by both these Sundays is not enough to explain why the Church vests herself in rosacea. To understand, we must examine that venerable Lenten tradition called the Roman Stations and delve deep into the history of Christianity.

The Roman Stations are of ancient usage: each "station" is one of Rome's oldest churches. When Christianity became legal after three centuries of persecution, the Church went on the offensive to counteract the innumerable pagan feasts, often celebrated by large public processions. Christians in Rome developed rival processions to holy sites across the City while singing psalms and litanies, and after arriving at a particular "station," the Pope or one of the senior Cardinals would celebrate Mass at that church. Eventually, the entire season of Lent became like one big penitential procession throughout the City, and each day was assigned a station. If one reads certain older missals or breviaries, one can find the Italian-Latin name of the Roman Station (i.e., Santa Maria in Trastevere, San Lorenzo in panisperna, San Pietro ad vincula, etc.) under the heading for each day of Lent. In recent years, this practice has been revived, and one of Rome's auxiliary bishops will lead the station procession and Mass of the day.

The Roman Station for Laetare Sunday is Santa Croce in Gerusalemme. This basilica is famous for housing relics of the Passion, including one beam of the True Cross (hence the name "Holy Cross"), the lance of Longinus which pierced the Lord's side, thorns laid on Christ's head, nails of the crucifixion, and the Title ("Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews"). Before being converted into a church, it was a villa (the Sessorian Palace) owned by Saint Helena (Emperor Constantine's mother), who once made a famous voyage to the Holy Land to find

the instruments of the Passion. When she learned that a temple to Venus had been erected on Calvary to prevent Christian devotion, she ordered it demolished, and behold, under the rubble was found the holy relics. In addition to these, she brought back to Rome a big heap of soil from Calvary. She transformed the Sessorian Palace into a shrine for the relics and laid the soil of Jerusalem under the mosaic floor. Thus, when you venerate these sacred relics in this church today, you are in some sense standing “in Jerusalem.”

When the Papacy grew in prestige, it became custom for Popes, at their discretion, to send a Golden Rose to a Catholic noble in recognition of their patronage and service to the Church. In recent years, Popes have awarded it to persons as well as to papal basilicas of great importance. Historical recipients include Isabella I of Castille (1493), Catherine de’ Medici (1548), the Cathedral of Siena (1658), the Sanctuary of Our Lady at Fatima (1965), and the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, DC (2008). Fashioned of pure gold and often decorated with precious jewels, each Golden Rose was in fact a reliquary containing pieces of the True Cross. The rose was chosen because of its mystical symbolism: Christ is the “flower of the field and the lily of the valleys” (Song of Songs 2:1), while in Isaiah 11:1, the prophecy reads: “There shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root.” The rose itself, though beautiful, still has its thorns. In this image is encapsulated the confluence of pain and splendor, of terror and beauty; like little strands of silver woven into a field of blood-red fabric, the rose symbolizes the latent joy of Christ’s future triumph even in the midst of his suffering. Because of this connection to the Passion, the Popes blessed the Golden Rose on Laetare Sunday— whose station church is *Santa Croce in Gerusalemme*.



Laetare Sunday became so associated with the blessing of the Golden Rose that the Popes adopted rose-colored vestments as part of the day’s celebration; because this day hosted such a special event, the bright rosaceo matched the festive character demanded by the introit text and the blessing of the Rose. Even the Gospel for the day in the old missal— the multiplication of loaves and fishes— carries the theme of happy abundance. Laetare Sunday became a brief “break” from Lenten austerity, and in time, Gaudete Sunday in Advent analogously adopted this parallel function until it too received the privilege of rosacea vestments. From Rome, this practice spread to the Western Church at large after the Council of Trent.

All these seemingly varied facts— the Golden Rose, the Roman Stations, the relics of the Passion, St. Helena, Laetare Sunday— all these are represented in the use of rosaceo vestments. These are the historical roots which inform the details of a particular liturgical celebration; just as there was a continuous human genealogy from Jesse to Christ, so too must we never lose sight of the profound and beautiful origins of our liturgies— for through these little details, we unite ourselves with the faithful of ages past and pray as they did. • J.B.

Notes on Stewardship

The ministers of the Church, especially the ordained clergy, have the duty to provide for the spiritual, sacramental, and liturgical needs of the People of God. In return, the faithful are obliged to assist the Church through both spiritual and material means, that is, by prayer and by contributions. In this relationship of mutual aid and mutual responsibility, both the clergy and the lay faithful build up the Kingdom of God by bringing together their distinct gifts for the benefit of their local faith community.

Our priests are happy to fulfill the special vocation to which God has called them, namely, to do the work of Christ by offering the sacraments to us. However, this most important work requires the spiritual and material assistance of all parishioners. When we offer our time, talent, and treasure to the parish community, our priests are better able to respond directly and speedily to our spiritual needs, secure in the knowledge that everything required to sustain the parish and her clergy—from the bread, wine, & oils necessary for sacramental matter, to the basic supplies needed to run the parish office, to the maintenance of sacramental records—is taken care of.

Lux Vera

The Church reminds all the faithful of the responsibility to provide for the material needs of the faith community in both the *Code of Canon Law* and in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

The Christian faithful are obliged to assist with the needs of the Church so that the Church has what is necessary for divine worship for apostolic works and works of charity and for the decent sustenance of ministers. (*Code of Canon Law* 222)

The fifth precept (“You shall help to provide for the needs of the Church”) means that the faithful are obliged to assist with the material needs of the Church, each according to his own ability. The faithful also have the duty of providing for the material needs of the Church, each according to his own abilities. (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* 2043)

Certainly, the Church does not impose terms as strict as those mentioned in the Old Testament, which obliged the people of Israel to offer a full ten percent (the word “tithes” literally means “ten percent”) of their belongings to the Temple, in order to sustain the daily sacrifices (see, for example, Numbers 18:21-26). This ten percent harkens back to Abraham’s first offering to the high priest Melchizedek (Genesis 14). In the New Testament, however, Saint Paul the Apostle takes a slightly different and more reasonable approach. While reiterating the faithful’s obligation to support the work of the Apostles, he does not exact a “uniform tax rate,” as it were, but leaves room for the prudential judgment of each Christian. He says to the Corinthians:

Now in regard to the collection for the holy ones, you also should do as I ordered the churches of Galatia. **On the first day of the week each of you should set aside and save whatever one can afford**, so that collections will not be going on when I come. And when I arrive, I shall send those whom you have approved with letters of recommendation to take your gracious gift to Jerusalem. (1 Corinthians 16:1-3)

In his second letter to the same community, Paul explains at length the importance of sustaining the Church’s ministry.

So I thought it necessary to encourage the brothers to go on ahead to you and arrange in advance for your promised gift, so that in this way it might be ready **as a bountiful gift and not as an exaction**. Consider this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each must do as already determined, without sadness or compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. Moreover, God is able to make every grace abundant for you, so that in all things, always having all you need, you may have an abundance for every good work. As it is written: “He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.” The one who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed and increase the harvest of your righteousness. **You are being enriched in every way for all generosity, which through us produces thanksgiving to God, for the administration of this public service is not only supplying the needs of the holy ones but is also overflowing in many acts of thanksgiving to God.** Through the evidence of this service, you are glorifying God for your obedient confession of the gospel of Christ and the generosity of your contribution to them and to all others, while in prayer on your behalf they long for you, because of the surpassing grace of God upon you. (2 Corinthians 9:5-14)

How can we best respond to the Church’s call, rooted in Apostolic teaching, to support the ministry and the ministers of the Church? Perhaps the threefold alliterative phrase “Time, Talent, & Treasure” can help us explore the ways to foster stewardship of the Church’s resources.

Time

The first and most important way by which we give our time to the Church is to spend time *in prayer*. Whether this done in the public liturgies of the Church or in the comfort of our homes, whether we are obliged to pray the Liturgy of the Hours or not, we all must set aside time in our day to pray to God, asking Him to provide for our needs and to give us the means to contribute to the Church’s mission. Furthermore, all things that we do in the parish must be done in and with prayer; without the grounded connection to God which comes through prayer, all our human efforts remain simply mere human efforts. Only the help of God can join our efforts to his ongoing work for the salvation of souls and the strengthening of the community.

Talent

The use of our talents necessarily implies the proper and prayerful use of our time. Furthermore, proper use of our time and talent requires discernment of our gifts and abilities, accounting for the strengths which God has given us. Again, the Apostle Paul teaches us well when he notes of the diversity of gifts and talents. Writing to the Ephesians, he says:

But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore, it says: "He ascended on high and took prisoners captive; he gave gifts to men." What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended into the lower regions of the earth? The one who descended is also the one who ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things. **And he gave some as apostles, others as prophets, others as evangelists, others as pastors and teachers, to equip the holy ones for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God,** to mature adulthood, to the extent of the full stature of Christ, so that we may no longer be infants, tossed by waves and swept along by every wind of doctrine arising from human trickery, from their cunning in the interests of deceitful scheming. Rather, living the truth in love, we should grow in every way into him who is the head, Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, with the proper functioning of each part, brings about the body's growth and builds itself up in love. (Ephesians 4:7-24)

Here at the Cathedral of Christ the Light, we are blessed with many laypeople endowed with particular gifts and talents, who put them to good use for the glory of God, the salvation of souls, and the exaltation of his Church. Whether these are people who help our liturgies through song and service, or those who lead Bible study sessions, or those who oversee faith formation, or the docents who lead tours throughout the Cathedral campus, or those who assist in the setup and decoration of the parish for major feasts, the Cathedral Parish is grateful to all those who help our priests shoulder the heavy burden of engaged, vivifying, effective pastoral ministry. Through their motivation, love for the Church, and dedication to the parish, these laypeople help to concretely build up the Kingdom of God here in Oakland.

In our recent Cathedral Parish Survey, not a few respondents wrote comments about the need for more activities outside Masses, more outreach to the local community, and more engagement of parishioners during Sunday hospitality. Fr. Brandon and the Cathedral Staff agree wholeheartedly with these assessments. But in order to strengthen our mission of evangelizing the Diocese, especially through service to the local community, we need the *time* and *talent* of motivated, dedicated, and fired-up members of this community to start and lead these efforts. Our three priests and the small Cathedral Staff cannot do this alone.

For those who may be unaware, all three priests assigned to this parish (Fr. Brandon, Fr. Bich, and Fr. Javier) each have major responsibilities which frequently take them away from the Cathedral. Fr. Brandon is Bishop Barber's principal Master of Ceremonies and must travel with the Bishop to coordinate major events throughout the Diocese. Fr. Bich is the Judicial Vicar who oversees the Diocesan Tribunal and Canon Law Department. He works full time in the Chancery (not the parish) dealing with canonical and legal issues spanning the entire Diocese. Fr. Javier Diaz, SJ, is a fully-licensed medical doctor who cares for patients regularly at the Order of Malta Clinic here in Oakland.

Because of their own individual gifts and talents, our Cathedral priests often find themselves dedicated to pressing responsibilities outside the purview of normal pastoral duties. Because of this, we often rely on retired priests, priests from other parishes, or priests from religious orders (especially Dominicans and Franciscans) to cover some of our weekday Masses. This is, furthermore, why the Cathedral must rely on *you all*, the faithful lay members of this parish, to propose, plan, and execute further ministerial and outreach efforts in the future.

Our Cathedral Rector and Staff are willing to provide the full resources of the Cathedral facilities to make these outreach efforts a reality. However, we are simply unable to directly oversee them all. If you have ideas for future ministerial and outreach projects, please do not hesitate to contact the Cathedral Staff about them. If it is a project that will both contribute to the Church's evangelical mission and raise the public profile of the parish, Fr. Brandon would absolutely love to hear your proposal. We want to empower the lay faithful and we encourage their initiative in developing and leading new avenues of service and outreach to the parish and beyond.

Treasure

Finally, we must consider the concrete material needs of the parish. As you can see in Fr. Brandon's report on the parish's finances (page X), we as a parish are projected to operate at a deficit of \$13,000 through 2020. Fr. Brandon and the Parish Finance Council have already taken steps to drastically decrease our deficit from last year, and we as a parish are hopeful and optimistic in the continued and improving financial viability of the Cathedral in the coming years.

The Cathedral Parish's organizational independence from the Diocese means that we as parish must remain diligent in raising our own funds and caring for our own resources. Because of this, your personal contributions to the parish—whether you donate to every Sunday collection or just a few times a year—are greatly appreciated. Every single contribution to the parish, whether it goes in the collection

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basket during Mass, or into a donation box in a side chapel, or to the Cathedral Office, directly funds the maintenance of liturgical, sacramental, and pastoral ministries at the Cathedral of Christ the Light.

Conclusion

On behalf of Fr. Brandon, the Cathedral Staff thanks each and every parishioner who gives generously of their time, talent, and treasure to the parish for the sake of the Church and her evangelical mission. Ensuring the continued success of this faith community is impossible without the gift of your prayers and material contributions to the Cathedral of Christ the Light. May we, as a unified faith community, always work together for the Kingdom of God here in Oakland, and may the stewardship of our gifts always contribute to the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Light of the World. • C.T.L.



Questions & Answers with Joey Belleza

In our first installment of **CTL Q&A**, we deal with two related issues that take up a lot of our attention in the Cathedral Office. We hope the answers provided here will also be of help to parishioners who may one day face the same situations!

Question #1:

Joey,

Thanks for the newsletter and providing ways I could send you a question about anything. My question is: Both my parents are inurned at The Cathedral of Christ the Light. I plan to request a Mass to bless them at the mausoleum on their birthday or the R.I.P. date! Which do you think would be more appropriate?

thank you,

P.

Dear P.,

The dates of birth and passing are both important, and each one is an appropriate occasion for offering a Mass for deceased loved ones. Prayers or Masses offered for poor souls in Purgatory at any time of year are just as beneficial to those faithful departed. However, the tradition of our Church seems to place more attention on the death anniversary as a day of commemoration. One only need to recall the many devotions, both liturgical and non-liturgical, often attached to the date of death.

It is worth noting that the idea of celebrating birthdays is a relatively late development in Christian culture. In older times, and even in some places through the 19th century, the date of Baptism was celebrated with more solemnity. Children would even be given the name of the saint whose feast fell on that day, such that the celebration of that saint was given all the attention that we give to birthdays today. The feasts of saints, especially ancient martyrs, usually fall on their date of their passing, again showing the importance placed by the Church on the death anniversary.

If you had to choose just one day, I would suggest keeping the ancient tradition of offering a Mass for the Dead (Requiem Mass) on the death anniversary. However, it may sometimes happen that a death anniversary falls on a day in which a Mass for the Dead is prohibited (e.g., Solemnities which are Holy Days of Obligation, Holy Thursday, the Triduum, Sundays of Lent, Sundays of Advent, Sundays of Easter, or Patronal Feasts of parishes). In that case it is wise to transfer the celebration to the next possible day, or the birthday, or date of baptism, or any other date not prohibited.

Note that a Requiem Mass is a special Mass with its own proper prayers which focus specifically on asking God's mercy for the deceased. This is distinct from a Mass intention for the dead, which can be applied to any Mass on any day.

Thank you for this question-- I hope this helps!

-Joey

Question #2:

Joey,
My question relates to the part of the Mass we call "Universal Prayer." This varies from day to day. Who determines what intentions are to be included? May the faithful make special requests?
Thank you.

-G.

Dear G.,

Thanks for your question. Your question provides us a much-needed opportunity not only to clarify a specific part of the Mass, but to also address a very important part of Catholic life which is often obscure or confusing to both Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

The General Instruction of the Roman Missal (GIRM), paragraph 69 reads:

In the Universal Prayer or Prayer of the Faithful, the people respond in some sense to the Word of God which they have received in faith and, exercising the office of their baptismal Priesthood, offer prayers to God for the salvation of all. It is desirable that there usually be such a form of prayer in Masses celebrated with the people, so that petitions may be offered for holy Church, for those who govern with authority over us, for those weighed down by various needs, for all humanity, and for the salvation of the whole world.

The petitions for the Universal Prayer at the Cathedral are determined by many factors: the readings of the day, the feast (if any) falling on that day, and Mass intentions brought to the Parish Office by members of the faithful. At the Cathedral, the Universal Prayers for Masses which fulfill Sunday obligations (including Feasts of Precept outside Sundays such as Christmas or Immaculate Conception) are composed in-house, usually by John Renke, our Director of Cathedral Operations. At times, the responsibility for the Universal Prayer falls to me.

If for some reason there are no prepared intentions written down (which happens rarely at the Cathedral), the intentions are left up to the discretion of the priest celebrating that Mass, who will compose them *ad libitum* in a way that connects with the readings or feast of the day. Per GIRM paragraph 70, the intentions should generally include prayers for: (a) for the needs of the Church; (b) for public authorities and the salvation of the whole world; (c) for those burdened by any kind of difficulty; (c) for the local community.

These petitions represent public prayers brought to Mass *by the people*, so that as one community they might lift their voices to the Lord with the same heart and mind—with the same intentions—at Mass. A moment to pray silently for personal or private intentions may also be added; these personal intentions are joined with the public intentions to the Mass in the same way—as prayers offered *by the people*.

Because these prayers are offered publicly, the intentions must be composed in a way that avoids scandal, respects the sacralty of the Liturgy, does not contradict Church teaching, addresses a true spiritual need, and is not trivial (i.e., praying for the Warriors to win a game). The priest is to ensure that this happens. GIRM 71 says:

It is for the Priest Celebrant to regulate this prayer from the chair. He himself begins it with a brief introduction, by which he calls upon the faithful to pray, and likewise he concludes it with an oration. The intentions announced should be sober, be composed with a wise liberty and in few words, and they should be expressive of the prayer of the entire community.

Beyond the general intercessions offered by the people, another petition announced during the Universal Prayer will refer to the specific *Mass intention* for that particular Eucharistic celebration. This petition normally contains words such as "This Mass is offered for..." or "At this Mass we remember and pray for..." Sometimes the celebrant will mention this petition within the Eucharistic Prayer itself. *This Mass intention is the specific purpose for which the priest offers that particular Mass.* This intention has an elevated status on account of the priest's sacramental ordination. The priest, acting in the person of Christ Himself, brings this single intention to God in an intensified and more complete way, offering that intention along with the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ to the Father in Heaven. The Mass intention is *the primary purpose and reason why* that Mass is offered; to underscore the importance of this intention, the priest himself can normally only offer one intention per Mass.

The Church has always upheld the custom of accepting an offering, *no matter how small*, for a specific Mass intention which the priest offers at Mass. These offerings contribute to serving the needs of the Church and sustaining her ministers. In centuries past, these offerings were not only monetary; they sometime took the form of supplies or food for the poor. Monetary offerings (stipends) were also given to priests for a Mass intention, especially when the priest had to travel long distances to celebrate Mass for the person or family who requested it. Today, Mass offerings are almost always monetary, and in the Diocese of Oakland, the standard offering for a Mass intention is \$10 (ten US Dollars).

Nevertheless, a priest is always free to accept a Mass intention for an offering of any size, *even if it is lower in value than the standard offering.* He may also agree to apply an intention to a Mass *without receiving any offering at all*, at his discretion. The priest himself only receives up to the standard \$10 per Mass intention, and in the case of larger offerings, the excess amount goes to Diocesan ministerial and

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charitable services. Notably, one of the most important destinations of excess offerings is for the care of our elderly retired priests.

Obviously, the venerable practice of giving offerings for Mass intentions can be abused. In the 16th century, the charge of “buying and selling Masses” was one of the great false accusations which led the first Protestants to break from the Catholic Church. In some cases, there arose an unfortunate practice in which individual priests would habitually collect several stipends for multiple intentions, but celebrate just one Mass for them all. The habitual multiplication of stipends for a single Mass is a grave abuse of the priestly office, and so the Church has always taken pains to regulate the reception of stipends, in order that Masses would not be turned into a source of private profit.

As a result, the Council of Trent, the 1983 Code of Canon Law (canons 945-958), and a 1991 decree from the Congregation for the Clergy in Rome give strict regulations regarding Mass stipends. Without citing the documents at length, the rules in brief are as follows:

- A priest may only receive one stipend per Mass intention (Canon 948)
- Except in very rare circumstances, multiple Mass intentions cannot be satisfied by a single Mass
- If multiple intentions (and multiple stipends) are offered for a single Mass, those who offered the intentions/stipends must agree to “share” that Mass

If you would like to make an offering for a Mass intention, please contact me by email or at the Parish Office during business hours. We will make our best effort to accommodate your intention request. However, please know that Mass intentions fill up very quickly and our priests may not be able to offer a Mass for your intention on the day or time requested. We understand that people want to offer Masses especially on the anniversaries of significant events, or for the healing of loved ones who have suddenly fallen ill, or for other reasons that may be time-sensitive. We also understand that the requestor often wishes to be present for the Mass of their intention. However, due to the large volume of requests we receive, satisfying every desire is simply impossible. If your desired day or time is unavailable, your intention will be scheduled for the next available Mass. We ask for your patience and understanding in those cases.

Another note: in my short time at the Cathedral, it has come to my attention that some very pious people in the past have tried to “buy out” large numbers (i.e., dozens) of Masses at one time with one large offering for all their desired intentions. I am sure that the such requestors do so with a firm belief in the fruits of the Mass. However, priests must ensure that Masses are not reserved in this manner to avoid the appearance of “buying out” or “hoarding Masses” selfishly; in addition, the Cathedral must do its best to give all people a fair chance to make Mass offerings on occasions dear to them. As a result, going forward, no person may request intentions for more than 5 (five) Masses per calendar year. Of course, all current Mass intentions will still be honored.

To make the process more equitable in the future, we will adopt the following procedure. **On a Sunday to be determined later this year, signups for Mass intentions for the year 2021 will be offered after all Masses on that day. Signups will be first come, first served. After that day, Masses without assigned intentions will be available for signup during business hours.**

The standard offering for Mass intentions in the Diocese of Oakland remains \$10; *however, all offerings are of your own free-will.* We will not turn you away if you only have \$9.99, or \$5, or just \$1. *A priest will offer a Mass for your intention even if you have nothing to give.* We accept whatever you can offer, even if it's just your prayers, because *the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass is neither bought nor sold.*

Grace, thank you once again for your question. Forgive the long response, but your simple query touches on some very complex and important matters in the life of every parish. My response is not only for you, but for the benefit of everyone in the Cathedral community. I hope this gives some helpful clarifications on the nature of the Universal Prayer, Mass intentions, and Mass stipends.

-Joey

Got any burning questions about Catholic life? Send us your queries on anything from philosophy & theology, liturgy & sacraments, scripture & tradition, Church history & current events, or anything else having to do with the Church! Email Joey Belleza at jbelleza@oakdiocese.org with the subject heading “CTL Q&A” and we’ll do our best to answer your question!



Cathedral Information

Did You Know?

It may be useful here to note some unique features of the organization of the Cathedral. While most people may think of the Chancery (Diocese) and the Cathedral Parish a more-or-less unified organization, the fact is that the Cathedral stands at the intersection of *three separate entities*: the **Diocese of Oakland (Chancery)**, the **Cathedral Corporation**, and the **Cathedral Parish**. In terms of financial and material resources, the Cathedral Parish is the smallest of the three.

The **Chancery** is the Bishop's administrative apparatus for the oversight of all Catholic parishes and apostolates in the Diocese of Oakland. The Cathedral Parish's relationship to the Chancery is the same as that of any of the 83 other parishes in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, with its own financial structure to fund basic parish necessities and ministries. The parish must raise its own funds through normal Sunday collections and generous donations from benefactors, just like any other church in the Diocese. If the parish were in far worse financial trouble, Fr. Brandon would be expected to find means to fix the situation. He cannot expect a "bailout" from the Diocese simply because he is in charge of the Cathedral.

The **Cathedral Corporation** is an independent organization responsible for the physical facilities of the Cathedral and Chancery campus. As a separate corporation, it assumed all financial responsibilities and liabilities associated with the cost of the campus, including litigation with the engineering and construction agencies responsible for structural deficiencies. It is the **Cathedral Corporation**, not the Diocese or the Cathedral Parish, which has directly assumed the debt associated with the construction and repair of the Cathedral, Chancery, and Event Center. The Corporation has its own financial structures and resources to finance the resolution of its debt and to fund any physical alterations and maintenance projects across the campus. Notably, the Corporation also manages access to our underground parking structure. If there are any necessary structural enhancements or modifications to the Cathedral complex, such decisions legally and financially fall to the Corporation, not to the Rector or to the Bishop. The legal and financial independence of the Corporation from Diocese ensures that the debts incurred in the construction of the Cathedral campus do not negatively affect the operations of the Chancery and other parishes in the Diocese.

Finally, the **Cathedral Parish** is responsible for the maintenance of liturgical, sacramental, and pastoral ministry. It must work with its own resources, independently of the Diocese and the Corporation, to ensure the dispensation of the sacraments, the spiritual care of its parishioners, and the proper stewardship of its own financial resources. Furthermore, because the Corporation owns the property of the Cathedral campus, the Cathedral Parish contributes to the resolution of the Corporation's debt by paying monthly rent to the Corporation. This remains one of the Parish's largest enduring expenses—expenses which we cannot pay without your continued generosity!

We hope this clarifies some of the complexities surrounding our unique situation here at 2121 Harrison Street!

LITURGY & SACRAMENTS AT THE CATHEDRAL OF CHRIST THE LIGHT

SUNDAYS (thru March)

5:30 PM English (Saturday)
8:00 AM Vietnamese
10:00 AM Solemn Mass
12 Noon English
2:00 PM Spanish

WEEKDAY MASSES

Monday - Friday
7:10 AM English
12:10 PM English
Wednesday
7:00 PM Spanish
Saturday
7:30 AM Vietnamese

RECONCILIATION

Tuesday & Thursday
11:00 AM - 12:00 Noon
Wednesday (Eng/Esp)
6:00 PM - 7:00 PM
Saturday
4:30 PM - 5:20 PM

EXPOSITION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT

First Friday of the Month
11:00 AM English
7:00 PM Vietnamese

CATHEDRAL PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Thursday
10:00 AM - 2:00 PM

(510) 496-7201
cathedral@oakdiocese.org
ctlcathedral.org



CHRIST THE LIGHT
CATHEDRAL PARISH
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OAKLAND, CA 94612