

***Parish Newsletter
For
26 December 2021***



From Father Robert – Reflecting On The Gospel

“Family” today has many cultural and moral connotations and challenges for Christians. The “Holy Family” of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph may seem to exist on another planet or, at least, be light-years away from twenty-first century relevance. Yet the gospel truth that the Word of God for this feast affirms is that family life is “a kind of school of deeper humanity” that is penetrated by the spirit of Christ. It is a challenge to live in mutual respect and love: for parents to honor the dignity of their children, and children to respect the dignity of their parents, each one bound to the other in the love that God has lavished upon us, as John writes in today’s second reading.

Our understanding of what we usually call “the finding in the temple” has often been sabotaged by artistic depictions of a precocious child Jesus, haloed and white-clad, lecturing (and even berating!) the religious teachers. Yet if we are attentive to the text, Jesus is described as first listening to the temple teachers before asking questions at what was a customary festival and Sabbath question-and-answer session (as opposed to a judicial one). “Searching” and “Finding” are important gospel themes in Luke. They reflect the human experience that our important gospel themes in Luke.

They reflect the human experience that our questing so often involves questioning in the hope of finding that something more: more love, more wisdom, more truth.

Any parent can appreciate Mary and Joseph’s desperate search for and relief at finding Jesus, but there is another search, another finding that is of central importance. It hangs painfully on Jesus’ response to His mother’s question, “Son, why have You done this to us?” The first words of Jesus in Luke’s gospel are His response: “Why were you looking for me? Did you not know that I must be in My Father’s house?” – the affairs that will take Jesus through a life of obedience, through another Passover of pain, another three-day loss in the tomb and into His new and risen life. The most significant developmental task of adolescence is the search for and gradual finding of one’s identity, and as R. Alan Culpepper comments in the introduction to *The New Interpreter’s Bible*: “What defines one’s identity – family ties, religious experience, a sense of vocation, a personal creed, or one’s dreams and ideals? Jesus found His identity by affirming His relationship with God.”

For Mary and Joseph, as for all parents, there is the pain of allowing this child His independence, His identity, loving Him, not possessing Him or punishing Him, but not fully understanding Him. Surely, a sword passes also through Joseph’s heart as, in response to Mary’s words about “Your father and I,” and as if gently contradicting her, Jesus refers to “my Father.” For us, as for Joseph, commitment to gospel priorities will always cause some pain. Parents know this in a special and poignant way. For now, this “Passover” of the adolescent Jesus is a theological sign of what is to come.

After this, Jesus returns to Nazareth with Mary and Joseph and is obedient to them. In the verse preceding this gospel, Luke had written of Jesus' growth in human and divine wisdom after His presentation in the temple. The last verse of this temple incident with which Luke ends his narrative of Jesus' childhood is again a comment that it was in this human family that such growth continued. An aspect of doing His Father's will was His openness to being graced by the precious relationships of His family at Nazareth. Children and parents in every age and culture are meant to be grace for one another.



Imagine Jesus as a peer in your elementary school or high school. How do you think He would have been received? Would you have been friends?

Have you ever had a conflict with a parent or authority figure because of misunderstood communication? How does it feel to know Jesus had the same interaction with His parents?

What do you consider the "house of the Lord," and how do you choose to "dwell" there in everyday life? Is it the physical church? A moment of prayer and meditation? A garden or walk?



About Liturgy – Sacrosanctum Concilium's Emergence and Key Facets

This first document to come from Vatican II was approved by a nearly unanimous vote of the Council (2,147 to 4). The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy put into writing the principles emerging from the previous work of liturgical experimentations and adaptations, and set forth a road map, broadly, for implementation.

As previously mentioned, the concepts of "source" and "summit" and "Full, conscious, and active" participation found within are lynchpins of modern expressions of worship. The document also brought forth concepts that, some sixty years later, may seem like second nature to us: the Paschal Mystery (Christ's death, resurrection, and second coming, in a nutshell) and inculturation far beyond mere use of the vernacular.

Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy #37 is particularly worth revisiting frequently: "Even in the liturgy the church does not wish to impose a rigid uniformity in matters which do not affect the faith or the well-being of the entire community. Rather does it cultivate and foster the qualities and talents of the various races and nations. Anything in people's way of life which is not indissolubly bound up with superstition and error the church studies with sympathy, and, if possible preserves intact. It

sometimes even admits such things into the liturgy itself, provided they harmonize with its true and authentic spirit.” We will return to this paragraph and these critical concepts in future columns.



Sunday, 26 December 2021, The Feast of the Holy Family; Holy Eucharist at 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. Procession, Cantors and Organ (No Incense)

Friday, 31 December 2021, The Vigil Eucharist for The Solemnity of Mary, Mother Of God, New Year’s Eve, 4:00 p.m.

Saturday, 1 January 2022, The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, New Year’s Day, The World Day of Prayer for Peace; Holy Eucharist 11:00 a.m. Procession (No Incense), Cantors and Organ

Saturday, 1 January 2022, The Solemnity of The Epiphany, 4:00 p.m. Vigil Eucharist Cantors and Organ

Sunday, 2 January 2022, The Solemnity of the Epiphany, Holy Eucharist at 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. Procession (No Incense), Cantors and Organ, The Procession of The Three Kings

Saturday, 8 January 2022, The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, Vigil Eucharist 4:00 p.m. The Renewal of Baptismal Promises and Sprinkling Rite; Cantors and Organ

Sunday, 9 January 2022, The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, Holy Eucharist, 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. Procession (No Incense), The Renewal of Baptismal Promises and Sprinkling Rite; Cantors and Organ; The Conclusion of the Christmas Season.



Our parish is blessed with many parishioners who volunteer in a variety of ways that make our faith community the wonderful, amazing, welcoming, hospitable church that we are!

Our thanks: to those who clean and prepare the sanctuary and bathrooms regularly: **Reno and Thelma Benasfre, Al Cosce, Carole Miller, Rose Salamanca, Angela Bueno, and Steve Rojek.**

To the members of our Parking Lot Security Team: **Steve Rojek, Tony Gumina, Brian McCoy, Don Benson, Jose Perez, and Dave Simpson.**

To **Lisa Lombardo** who faithfully records our liturgy and uploads it to our YouTube Channel for those who cannot be with us in person.

To those who volunteer in the parish office: **Alicia Perez, Bev Iacona, Lorraine Lohmeier**, and all those who assist with accounting, recording, and banking.

To all those in Liturgical Ministry: **Ushers, Greeters, Altar Servers, Adult Acolytes,**

Altar Guild, Liturgy Committee, Art & Environment Committee, Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, and Cantors.

I want to especially single out the members of our Art & Environment Committee who have worked since the end of November, creating first the Advent Environment and then each week adding one more element to create the Christmas Environment which is now fully in place. They have worked hours, expending energy, enthusiasm, dedication, and commitment to create an environment that says “Christmas!” for its entire season. On behalf of all of us, our thanks and heartfelt gratitude to: **Pablo and Norma Villegas, Tony and Claudia Gumina, Leo and Minnie Rivera, Tom and Stevie Catchings, Theresa Nelms, Rich Confetti, Don Benson, Kristine Shoemaker, and Fr. Robert.**



As announced in October, our parish will be participating in the Listening Phase of the World-wide Synod called for by Francis, Bishop of Rome. Early next month, we will be announcing the dates and times for our parishioners to come together to listen to one another and dialogue about the future of the church and to respond to the questions that are being posed by Francis and the General Secretary of the Synod. I am also going to be having discussions with our Protestant sisters and brothers through the

Interfaith Council of Contra Costa County as well as the Jewish Community. Father Ron Schmit, the Pastor of St. Anne’s Parish in Byron, and I have also discussed the possibility of having at least one evening that would be open to anyone to come and share with us their hopes and dreams, what they would like to see happen in our denomination. All of that information will be forwarded to the Diocesan Taskforce as well as to the General Secretary of the Synod in Rome. I hope you will begin to do some reflection and come ready to participate and have your voice heard when the listening sessions start.



The Sanctuary Lamp in our church burns to The Glory of God and In Loving Memory of **Alfredo and Elina Avelar** from their daughter, **Terry Pedras**, who has made a financial gift to provide for the Sanctuary Lamp Candles for an entire year in loving memory of her parents.



On behalf of Father Moses and myself, I would like to thank all those who so lovingly and generously remembered us

with your cards, personal notes of appreciation and gratitude for our presence and ministry, for your gifts of baked goods, pastries, Christmas Cookies, beautifully wrapped personal gifts, bottles of wine, Christmas Letters, and financial gifts. We are grateful and humbled by your expressions of love and gratitude. We are both keenly aware of what a privilege and honor it is to be able to serve and minister along side you and with you. Please know of the gratitude and love we have for all of you.



This past Tuesday morning, the Leadership of our YLI Institute #101 here in Antioch presented a check to me in the amount of One Thousand Two Hundred and Fifty Dollars (\$1,250) representing one half of the proceeds from their recent On Line Raffle.

They designated their gift to the purchase of the new chairs for the Expanded and Renovated Parish Hall. Not only were they the first to fulfill their pledge, they now are also the first organization to make a contribution to our goal of 200 new banquet chairs for the new hall and kitchen. The cost of each new chair is \$45 and this gift will provide approximately 30 new chairs.

On behalf of all of us, I wish to thank all the members of the YLI for their ongoing support, thoughtfulness, and generosity to the parish and especially to the Expansion Fund.



From Werner Hoch

Advent is an opportunity to refresh and help us to be spiritually healthy, awake, and alert to receive Jesus in whatever form He may come to us.

Not all of us can do great things but we all can do small things with great love. A central belief in our food bank ministry is that we never base our assistance to others on their religious beliefs but on the need itself. There is a deep joy in giving since what we receive is much more than what we give. It is not how much we give but how much love we put into the giving.

I did not anticipate that our help with the Food Bank of Contra Costa-Solano would grow so far or so fast. I never doubted that it would happen, however, I didn't think it would be so successful. 200 families were assisted last Friday. We had over 24 volunteers who worked diligently to keep the seemingly endless flow of cars moving as quickly and safely as possible.

The coming Christmas holiday brought more families than we had seen in the past. Many families I spoke with expressed their sincere gratitude. Without the Food Bank supplying them with basic groceries, fresh produce, and fruit, they would not be able to survive. God gave us the gift to help others in many various ways and involvement in our food distribution ministry is just one of those many ways.

On behalf of all of us involved with our Food Bank Distribution Ministry, I would like to wish everyone a blessed Christmas and a healthy and Happy New Year.

Werner Hoch 

*Justice Corner by Carolyn Krantz,
Pastoral Associate*

Christmas is an exhausting and beautiful event. We race around shopping, baking, seeing friends and family. There is hardly time to reflect on the beauty and stillness of Christmas night. But yet, the Spirit invades our busyness and gives us moments when we treasure family or rejoice in the quiet where God embraces our world with love.

Then, with barely a time to take a breath, we have the feast of the Holy Family where virtues of obedience and respect for parents is encouraged. The events of the season pass too quickly. We see the beauty of all creation acknowledging the event. The stars give witness to God's love for us. The frozen ground bears the promise of new life. The bare branches hold within themselves the hope of spring, if only we can see it.

Yet the world is not safe. Mary and Joseph flee to Egypt to escape Herod's wrath. We look for a way through the morass of political intrigue and "the shocking collapse of critical thinking skills" (Rep. Jamie Raskin). We hope to return to the governance of, for and by the people. We hope for a world where cars are not broken into, and old people are not attacked on our streets, where "the peace of Christ controls our hearts." (Epistle).

In the Gospel, Jesus remains in the temple, "listening and asking questions." That should be our stance in prayer, listening and asking questions of the Spirit who guides us. Jesus chose this way of holiness even though it disturbed Mary and Joseph. Others in our orbit may not understand the journey that God places upon us, but we must continue to listen and ask questions as the liturgical year proceeds. How can I make my home life more loving? How can I offer comfort to those in need? How can I

be a peace maker in a world torn by strife and conflicting opinions? How can I remain in God's grace and be obedient to the Spirit's guidance?

Jesus answered His parents' questions by saying, "I must be in my Father's house." In other words, I must be where God wants me to be. I must follow the promptings of the Spirit and be directed accordingly. This is what we must imitate. No matter what our relatives and friends say, we must answer, "I must go where God directs and do what He commands of me." May this be our resolve for the New Year!

Let us take a moment as we pass from 2021 to 2022, to be thankful for the life we have and bring our critical thinking skills to make decisions for the future – the grace to change what we can and accept what we cannot, and the wisdom to know the difference, as the Serenity Prayer encourages us. Only through a commitment to prayer each day will we discern where the Spirit is leading in our families and in our parish. May 2022 be a year of enlightened progress and peaceful dialogue toward a world filled with God's love. We put on His mantle and move forward in hope.

**ON BEHALF OF ALL OF US MANY THANKS TO OUR PARISHIONERS WHO'S
GENEROSITY MADE OUR 2021 CHRISTMAS ENVIRONMENT POSSIBLE**

DONOR

Bloomfield, Marguirite
Catchings Family
DiMercurio, Mary Jo
Gemaehlich, Betty
Malonosan, Crispina
Mendoza, Violet
Nelms, Joe & Theresa
Silva, Emily

Carraher, Rick
Garcia, Reyna
Hadsell, Philip & Diane
Jennings, Nieves
Lamendola, Dorothy
Marini, George
Nelms, Joe & Theresa
Nerona, Candido & Sylvia
Santiago, Danny & Nora
Saunders, William & Anita

IN LOVING HONOR OR MEMORY OF:

Roy Bloomfield (husbanc), Helena (mother), Patricia (sister)
All of the family that have passed
Vetrano family, Frank & Carmen
Carolyn F. Bartlett
Terry M. Malonosan
Isabel Mendoza
Dan O'Connor for New Year's Eve
Joseph Silva



Recruitment Family Coordinator

Lumen Christi Academies Mission

Lumen Christi Academies is an independent, culturally diverse network of PK-8 Catholic schools with campuses in Oakland and Contra Costa County. Centered in Christ and rooted in social justice, Lumen Christi Academies develops the whole person through a collaborative experience that is dynamic, innovative, and accessible to all.

Position Overview

In partnership with the Lumen Christi Academies Schools Executive Director and LCA Schools Leadership, the Recruitment Family Coordinator will work to broaden parent engagement, foster a collaborative relationship with the greater community and help streamline recruitment efforts across the network of schools. Through the continued development of community relationships, the Recruitment Family Coordinator will provide ongoing formation as well as learning opportunities to our parent communities. The Recruitment Family Coordinator will also focus on strengthening and building leadership capacity within the LCA Schools.

Primary Responsibilities

Community Relations

- Hold the vision for creating a warm, welcoming, and safe environment for parents.
- Foster positive working relationships with the principal, pastor, and parent leaders at each LCA school site.
- Support, strengthen and expand existing community relations and partnerships to aid in furthering the Mission of the LCA Schools.
- Interface with students, parents, and all members of the school community.
- Invite the community at large to expo type events showcasing student work
- Create and send out all calendars, newsletters, emails and calls to families and community partners as appropriate.
- Attend community events hosted by local churches, and other related organizations to develop a strong presence within the community to drive interest and promote the school.
- Invite local community leaders to tour the campus and schedule opportunities for community leaders to meet with school leadership and connect further with the school.
- Provide the voice of parents in school by obtaining and communicating feedback and pertinent information to the administration.
- Support with translation as needed.



Recruitment Family Coordinator

Formation and Learning Opportunities

- Assess the needs of parents at each school site by conducting surveys. Collect and analyze data to help with developing school, parent, and family goals.
- Utilize outside partnerships and community contacts to provide ongoing learning and formation opportunities for parents.
- Hold monthly parent meetings focusing on:
 - Development
 - Recruitment training to market the school
 - Develop student and parent ambassadors to assist with community outreach and recruitment of students.
- Lead the planning and organizing of:
 - Open House/Prospective Family Information Nights
- Plan and Coordinate parent trainings in collaboration with and to be executed by principal or other staff members.
- Recruit outside volunteers to host workshops according to the needs of the parent community.

Recruitment

- Develop a marketing plan for engaging and recruiting families.
- Coordinate and host parent tours.
- Work alongside financial aid faculty coordinator.
- Meet with parents, one-on-one or small groups, to build relationships and encourage assistance with recruitment.
- Provide support with open house enrollment and admissions process.
- Support the management distribution of enrollment forms for new and returning students.
- Create service opportunities to streamline recruitment efforts.
- Assist with translation of materials as needed.



Recruitment Family Coordinator

Essential Qualifications

This position will interface with a wide range of audiences and requires the ability to easily maneuver between diverse groups and build relationships to advance the Lumen Christi Academies Schools mission. Knowledge of development and recruitment strategies and the ability to enhance community relations and engagement, both in the wider community and within the parent community. An understanding of and experience working with underrepresented groups and sensitivity for the needs of multicultural communities. Ability to communicate effectively, both verbally (including oral presentations) and in writing; establish and maintain effective working relationships with parents, school leadership, pastors, vendors, and the public. Strong interpersonal skills, creativity, decision-making, use of discretion, teamwork, negotiation, service orientation, and public relations. Foster a sense of partnership and trust among various communities. Bilingual in Spanish a plus.

Experience

Minimum 3-5 years of experience in development, fundraising, recruitment, or other similar area. Bachelor's degree in Marketing, Public Relations, or other associated field of study. Leadership and/or management experience including liaison and community building, program development, and supervision or any equivalent combination of education and experience which demonstrates the knowledge, skills and abilities to perform the above-described essential duties.

Compensation and Benefits

This is a full-time, exempt position which will require some weekend and evening work. Compensation according to diocesan scale (E-5 \$65-\$75K) depending on experience and qualifications. Full diocesan benefits including medical, dental/vision, diocesan sponsored retirement at 8% of salary, life insurance, short/long term disability and other diocesan benefits.

Interested candidates please submit letter of intent and resume to:

**Department of Human Resources
2121 Harrison Street, Suite 100
Oakland, CA 94612**

Or email at: gespinoza@oakdiocese.org

Deadline to apply: January 7, 2022