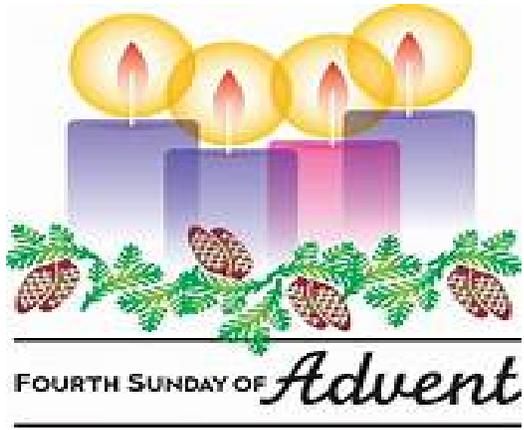


Parish Newsletter
For
19 December 2021



Reflecting On The Gospel

The large mysteries of the first three weeks of Advent converge this Sunday into the truth that the Christ Who will rule the cosmos was once carried in the small world of Mary's womb. John the Baptist, whose strong voice we heard on the Jordan riverbank last week, today has no voice and can only announce the good news of Jesus' equally silent advent by an exultant leap of joy in Elizabeth's womb. There are no crowds pressing forward, asking questions. There are only two pregnant women as the first and most intimate audience for the meeting of the Messiah with His precursor and the one question Elizabeth asks of Mary is: "How does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?"

As the ark of the covenant was being taken up to Jerusalem, David danced before it in joyful reverence for the sacred artifacts of Israel it contained. John now dances before Mary, the new "ark" of a new covenant, sealed in the flesh and blood of the child she carries in her womb – the most holy possession of Israel. When the six month old baby leaps in Elizabeth's womb, she too becomes a prophet. Filled with the Holy Spirit, she reads the signs of the times, the

"something new" of an ordinary human event – the stirring of the child in her womb – and proclaims the blessedness that God has bestowed on Mary and the One she carries.

The Advent mystery tells us so clearly that God has a special love for apparently unimportant people and places: for backwater Nazareth and its young woman; for the unnamed village of an old country priest and his aging wife; for the town of Bethlehem-Ephrathah which, by the time of the prophet Micah, whom we heard in the first reading, had been eclipsed by Jerusalem in importance, even though the former was David's birthplace. The Word of the Lord that came to Micah in the eighth century BCE announces that a new future awaits this town for, like a woman in labor, its pain (of neglect) will be changed when it brings forth a future king who will fulfill the dreams as yet unrealized by the Davidic lineage. The one to come will be shepherd of his flock, caring for them in the strength of the Lord and bringing peace and security. In such unimportant places and in unexpected ways, the Son of David will be born as this fulfillment of the dreams of His people. In us, too such dreams will be fulfilled if we offer Jesus hospitality.

Do we recognize the glory of God in unimportant people and places? Or do we drop a veil over the poverty and pain that can exist not only in far-off places, but also nearby, and even in our own heart? Some people dread the approach of Christmas. The loneliness, for example, of those suffering the pain of broken relationships or distance from loved ones is intensified by viewing the joyful companionship and family gatherings of those around them. In many places, the rates of suicide and domestic violence rise during this "season of goodwill" when not much goodwill is

experienced by some people. This is a challenge to our parishes and families, and one that many Christians are meeting with great generosity and hospitality.

God has given us the most wonderful of Christmas gifts, His own Son, wrapped in our human flesh. But the whole Christ, head and members, is not yet fully formed. Until the end of the ages, He continues to wrap Himself in the love and faithfulness of His disciples.



When was the last time you were so filled with joy and delight that you yelled about it, loudly?

How do you express sudden joy? How do you greet people you haven't seen in a while? What kind of greeting makes you feel most comfortable and loved?

Do you contemplate God in your personal devotion with more feminine or masculine imagery? How does this imagery inform your prayer?

What is the face of God? Do you see the face of God in your own life and work? Who shows the face of God to you?

O Antiphons

ERO CRAS: On December 17th, the “O” antiphons began appearing at our liturgies at the gospel acclamation, helping us notice and shift into the last few days of Advent preparations for Christmas. They are not antiphons when used in that way at Eucharist, however, they were first the antiphons to the *Magnificat* at Evening Prayer for each day. Each one offers a specific messianic title for the coming Christ:

December 17: Sapientia (Wisdom)

December 18: Adonai (Hebrew rendering of YHWH)

December 19: Radix Jesse (Flower of Jesse's Stem)

December 20: Clavis David (Key of David)

December 21: Oriens (Dawn, Literally “The East”)

December 22: Rex Gentium (King of All People)

December 23: Emmanuel (God with Us)

If one takes the first letter of each Latin title, working in reverse from December 23 to 17, two Latin words emerge: ERO CRAS – which means, in English “Tomorrow, I will be [there].” The familiar hymn, “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” is based on the “O” antiphons. Because their proper appearance in the church's liturgy is so late in the season, we do not use this Advent Carol (or any others based on the “O” antiphons) until the Fourth Sunday of Advent.



***About Liturgical Documents:
Sacrosanctum Concilium's Context***

With only a few words allowed here for what ought to be a multivolume effort, an important piece of context to mention is that Vatican II and especially the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy and its calls for reform did not emerge out of a vacuum and are not the ‘rupture’ some have described them as. Indeed, for a century there were legitimate liturgical experiments happening all around the world, in places like the Benedictine Abbey in Solesmes, France and at St. John’s Abbey, Benedictine, in Collegeville, Minnesota. Much of the work being done was a recovery of Gregorian chant, research into the patristic era of the church, and an exploration of the liturgical practices of that same time.

Pope Pius X, elected in 1903, issued a *moto proprio* (more on what those are another time!) on sacred music, wishing the laity to participate actively in the liturgy and called for more frequent reception of Holy Communion as well. Efforts between then and the Council included recognizing that liturgy is a human action as well as a religious and divine action, recalling the importance of Scripture in our worship, and many liturgical reforms by Pope Pius XII in the 1950s. These included broader permissions to use the vernacular at liturgies in certain situations, allowing the use of vernacular hymns, shortening the eucharistic fast and significant changes to the rites of Holy Week, including moving the Holy

Thursday liturgy to the evening, the Good Friday service to the afternoon, and making permanent the evening Great Vigil of Easter first used experimentally in 1951.

The church had much to talk about – the liturgical items mentioned here and so much more, liturgically and not – when Pope John XXIII convened the Council he would not see finish. None of the conversations, decisions, and following implementations pertaining to our liturgy would have happened without the preceding work and ministries that gave and continue to give context to them. We are still hard at work implementing the reforms, liturgical and otherwise, of Vatican II, and will be for many years to come.



I am very proud of the leadership and members of our **Filipino Community** who have planned and prepared the celebrations of Simbang Gabi this year, even though our parish hall is not yet ready for events. A major change in its observance and celebration is that the liturgies take place at 7:00 p.m. each evening. They began on Wednesday, December 15th and will continue this coming Thursday, December 23rd. Both Fr. Moses and myself will be presiding and preaching along with several guest Filipino priests from our diocese. Simbang Gabi is for all parishioners to join our Filipino sisters and brothers to help us prepare for the Christmas Feast. I hope you will come for one or more liturgies and experience this wonderful tradition.



Our Christmas Season Environment

Once again we invite you to join us in helping to provide the environment for Christmas and its season by making a donation to provide the garlands, wreathes, panels of decorative cloth that adorn our Icons, the Christmas Trees, candles, artwork, and poinsettias.

Donations may be made either **In Honor Of** or **In Loving Memory** of family members, loved ones, and friends. Please be sure to mark your contribution envelope accordingly. Your support enables the members of our Art & Environment Committee to transform our sanctuary to support our prayer from Christmas Eve all the way to the conclusion of the Christmas Season on January 9th. As always, we are deeply grateful for your continued generosity and support.



Friday, 24 December 2021, Christmas Eve: 4:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist

The Children of our Faith Formation Program tell the Story of Christmas through Word and Song

9:00 p.m. The Eucharist of Christmas Night: Procession (No Incense), Cantors and Organ

Saturday, 25 December 2021, Christmas Day: 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

Procession, Cantors and Organ (No Incense)
No 4:00 p.m. Liturgy

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.



Adult Acolytes

It has been quite a while since we invited adult members of the parish to serve as Adult Acolytes: Crucifer and Torchbearers. These are liturgical ministers, vested in white albs, who bear the Processional Cross and Processional Candles for our major liturgical events such as Christmas, Holy Week, Easter, and other feasts and solemnities. This ministry is open to all adult women and men, 18 years of age and older. Training is provided by Father Robert. If you feel called to this ministry of

enriching and enhancing our liturgies, please call the office and leave your name and contact information. We are especially in need of Adult Acolytes for the coming Christmas Season. For further information and to answer any questions, please speak to Father Robert.



Many thanks to the members of our **Art & Environment Committee** that have continued to add to the environment during these Advent days in preparation for Christmas: the Christmas Trees, Lighted Garland and Wreathes, the Lighted Wreathes in the Organ Gallery, and the Lighted Garland at the Presidential Platform, at the Ambo, and at the Baptistry, as well as for all the work they will do in the days of this week to finish their artistic work. We also thank **Pablo Villegas** and **Leo Rivera** for decorating the outside of the church with lights and wreathes to create a festive welcome to all who will worship with us throughout the Christmas Season. This is also the first year that we have had a Lighted “Parol” at the façade and entrance to the Portico.



Our Advent Adult Education Series

Our parish Faith Formation Program has offered a four-week Advent Series presented by Jackie Hooke, Pastoral Associate at Most Holy Rosary Church.

The series has been presented each Tuesday during Advent and the last one will be held on December 21, 2021 at 9:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. The theme of the last session will be:

Advent: A Time of AWE, WONDER, and JOY 12/21/21 Week 4. Advent: A Time to understand GOD’S GIFT to us.

I hope you will be able to join us.



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.**

To the Knights of Columbus that helped with shredding old documents that needed to be destroyed and saved the Office Staff hours by helping them out: **Jose Perez, Godfrey Nwasu, Seth Reese, and Bill Barbanica.**



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.

***Justice Corner by Carolyn Krantz,
Pastoral Associate***

I have been journaling for the last sixty years. I start each new year with the line in today's Epistle to the Hebrews, "At the head of the book is written, I have come to do your will, O Lord." I find that journaling helps me reflect on what the Lord wants of me. I can go back over today's reflections, or the reflections of many weeks and see new insights about what my life means and what direction I should take in Christ. "By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once and for all." What is it that you "bear in your body" that will lead you further into the Lord? Ask for a journaling book for Christmas.

In the Gospel, Elizabeth says to Mary, "Blessed is she who trusted that the Lord's words would be fulfilled." Trust is part of

Mary's spirituality and ours, too. We trust that what He has begun in us will be fulfilled. Maybe that's having another child, or beginning in a second marriage. Maybe it is taking a new job, or caring for a loved one. We are called to trust that God is with us and guides us into the future.

But the future has gotten more bleary in the last two years. COVID has taken its toll and changed the way we do things. Climate change has made the future of the earth uncertain. We see floods and tornadoes on the news. We experience drought and fires in California. Even the readings in Advent seem directed toward the "end times."

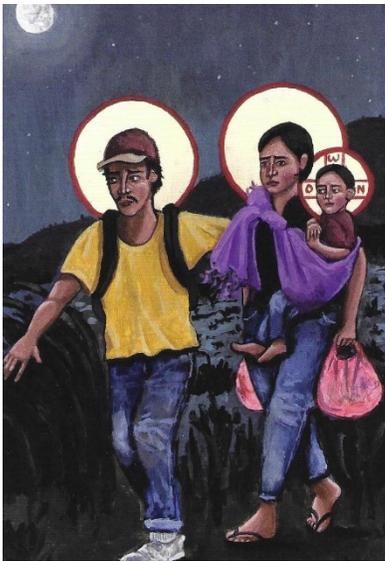
Recently I discovered a website called postdoom.com (Michael Dowd). In it the spiritual leaders were encouraging us how to manage the thoughts of climate change and the grief of COVID. We can be taken down into depression from all the destruction of climate changes. The priority is to look to what is soul nourishing. Move forward where the grace is. The midpoint between denial and regeneration is to trust in the Lord. Our future is calling us to greatness even if we cannot see it now. We must honor grief and move forward in trust.

In Mary's day things were similar. The Jewish state was under Roman occupation. Jewish leaders were often conspiring with the enemy rather than sticking to the Torah. God sent Joseph who had a trade to provide for her. Then the edict came that each was to go to their place of origin to register to be taxed. Mary was in the last weeks of her pregnancy. Would she have the Babe in some field along the road? She and Joseph were called to further trust.

Micah tells us that great things come from "a clan too small to be noticed." We know from many scriptures and stories of saints

that God “lifts up the lowly” and puts down the proud. So if you are an impoverished little one, REJOICE! “The Ruler whose origin is from of old...shall return in grace and reach the ends of the earth.” And “He shall be peace!” It takes a lot of trust to move forward in hope, but hope is where Advent calls us. We are called to accept the fullness of the reality into which we were born. We must act to move forward in whatever is soul nourishing. We are called to trust that God is with us, Emmanuel! And we, like Mary, must ponder these things in our hearts to see where God is leading us.

Christmas 2021



Holiday Blessings from Thomas P. Bonacci, C.P. Christmas 2021

Dear Friends,

I was sipping my coffee in one of my favorite places in San Francisco. The Sun was warm on this lovely, pleasant day. The City was alive after months of being on life-support as Covid-19 had its way with us.

I was longing to return to the "normalcy" of city life. The wounds of the pandemic are deep, but I sensed a slow rebirth. I had almost forgotten what I loved best about the City is what I wish did not exist.

As I sipped my coffee, pondering the rebirth of the busy streets, a poor man with deep penetrating eyes came walking through the doors of the coffee shop, I realized how much I missed seeing my friends who live in the streets, the doorways, and who knows where.

He was short and somewhat bent over. His pace was that of a person with a mission. Like kings looking for treasures, he rummaged through the garbage cans. No one was bothered or upset. Such activity has become routine.

He reminded me of the reality of the City, the Country and the World. Have I come to accept hunger, homelessness, and alienation as usual? Oh, what a gift he gave me. It must not be this way. I will attempt to be more generous, courageous, and sensitive to the injustice around me.

As the streets come back to life, the poor rise from their invisibility, allowing us to meet them and be loved

by them. As I reached for a five, he looked at me and blessed me with his eyes. Then, rushing through the door with a sense of urgency, he nodded, smiled, and disappeared into the crowded street.

He is out of sight. May he never be out of mind. I wanted to give a five-dollar bill to a man who gave me heart anew!

Blessing to you, my friends, for your generous heart. May my friend meet you on the pathways of your life. Blessed Holidays to all.

Peacefully,
Tom, C.P.



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

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Britton & Kaiser Families
Douglas Carpenter, Dolores Hansen, Howard Hansen Sr., Seth Reese, Noam & Bowie DeLorean
Geri Chiechi, Steve Chiechi & John Chiechi
St. Ignatius Staff
All children, grandchildren and great grandchildren
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Bernadette M. Cox
Maria Adelaide da Silva
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IN LOVING MEMORY OR HONOR OF:



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

What is Redistricting and Why Should You Care About Redistricting at BART? Tune into the meeting and hear what the Redistricting consultants have to say about the process.

Below is the link to agenda materials for the meeting and the zoom link. We hope to see you there. For any questions, you can contact me on the number below or redistricting@bart.gov

<https://bart.legistar.com/View.ashx?M=A&ID=907236&GUID=5B433416-C0C0-413E-B603-4F6D636296F9>

You are invited to a Zoom webinar.

When: Dec 1, 2021, 01:00 PM Pacific Time (the US and Canada)

Topic: Redistricting Committee

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89593310947>

Jacqueline R. Edwards, CMC, CPMC

District Secretary

San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART)

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