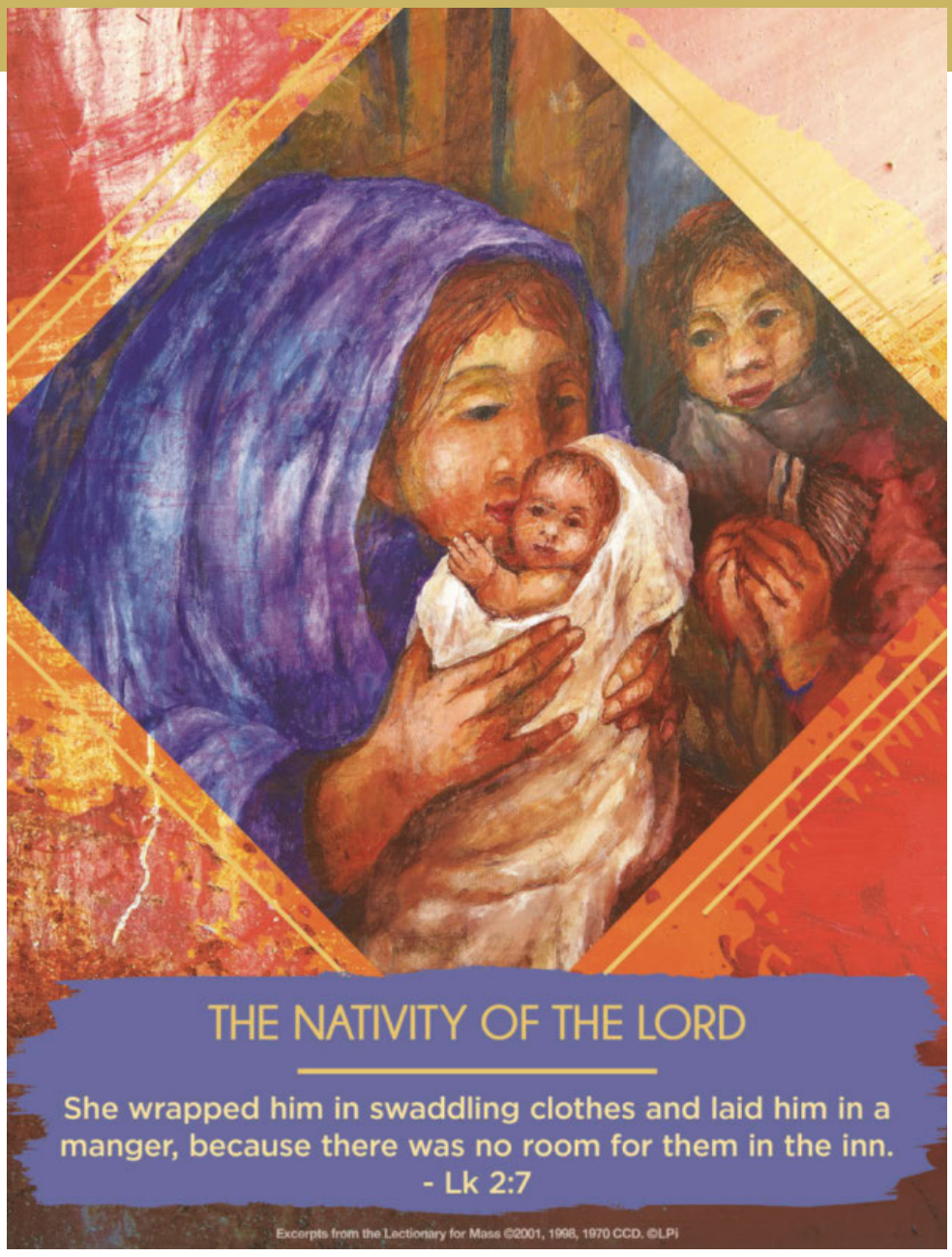
WEEKLY BULLETIN

ST. RITA CATHOLIC PARISH

A FAITH COMMUNITY SINCE 1908

DECEMBER 25, 2022 | THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD



GET IN TOUCH

Pastor Rev. Thomas Baker
Deacon Chuck McDaniels

Address: 318 N. Baldwin Ave.
Sierra Madre, CA, 91024-1203
Parish Office: 50 E. Alegria Ave.
Sierra Madre, CA 91024

Phone: (626) 355-1292
Fax: (626) 355-2290
Website: www.st-rita.org

MASS TIMES

Weekends:
Saturday Vigil 5:00 p.m.
Sunday 7:30 a.m., 10:00 a.m. (livestreamed), and 12:00 p.m.

Weekdays:
Monday, Tuesday, Friday, and Saturday at 8:00 a.m.; Communion Service Wednesday at 8:00 a.m.

Holy Days:
Varies; to be announced

SACRAMENTS

Sacrament of Reconciliation:
Saturdays 3:30-4:30 p.m.

Devotions:
Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Saturdays at 7:50 a.m.

Adoration and Holy Hours:
Online, schedule varies; to be announced

LIVESTREAM ST. RITA ON FACEBOOK!

To access the livestreamed Mass on Sundays at 10:00 a.m., and to access the Sunday Mass Worship Aids (hymns and readings included), please visit **www.facebook.com/SaintRitaSM**. From there, go directly to the "video" page.

CONTACT INFORMATION

PASTORAL STAFF

Rev. Thomas Baker, *Pastor*
frtombaker@st-rita.org ..... (626) 355-1292
Deacon Chuck & Linda McDaniels
deaconchuck@st-rita.org ..... (626) 355-1292
Fr. Chris Thiel, OFM Cap., *Weekend Supply Priest*

ADMIN. & MINISTRY STAFF

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Jennifer Bowen — communications@st-rita.org
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Cristina Cullen — weddings@st-rita.org
Funeral Coordinator ..... (626) 355-1292 x245
Vivian Montoya — bereavement@st-rita.org

EDUCATION & FAITH FORMATION

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Adela Solis — solis@st-ritaschool.org
St. Rita School Secretary ..... (626) 355-6114 x102
Sara Landis — landis@st-ritaschool.org
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Theresa Costanzo — dff@st-rita.org
Confirmation & Youth Ministry Coordinator ..... (626) 355-1292 x259
Raquel Hernandez — ymcoordinator@st-rita.org
RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults) ..... (626) 355-1292
Dcn. Chuck McDaniels — rcia@st-rita.org

PARISH LIFE & MINISTRY

Altar Servers
Kathy Ganino ..... altarservers@st-rita.org
Bereavement Ministry
Vivian Montoya ..... bereavement@st-rita.org
Eucharistic Adoration
Kathy Ganino ..... eucharistic.adoration@st-rita.org
Eucharistic Outreach
Chuck McDaniels ..... eucharistic.outreach@st-rita.org
Finance Council
Bill Sullivan ..... finance@st-rita.org
Grandparents Ministry
Daniel Lopez ..... grandparentsministry@st-rita.org
Holy Housekeepers
Patty Sullivan ..... holy.house@st-rita.org
Immaculate Heart of Mary Prayer Group
Susan Day ..... mary.prayer@st-rita.org
Knights of Columbus, Council 5137
Stan Pinta ..... kofc@st-rita.org
Knit & Crochet Ministry
Ana Ptasinski & Ann Wolf ..... knit.crochet@st-rita.org
Lectors & Eucharistic Ministers
David & Jill Muhs ..... em@st-rita.org
Pastoral Council
Pat Gibson ..... pastoral@st-rita.org
Prayer Shawl & Lap Blanket Ministry
Mary Taillac & Marilyn Delgatto ..... shawl.blanket@st-rita.org
Porters
Justin Smith ..... porters@st-rita.org
Retreat Ministry
Bill Cosso ..... materdolorosa@st-rita.org
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David Muhs ..... em@st-rita.org
St. Rita Guild
Lenore Crilly ..... guild@st-rita.org
St. Rita Men's Club
Daniel Sosa ..... mens.club@st-rita.org
Ushers & Greeters
Dave Loera ..... ushers@st-rita.org

SACRAMENT INFORMATION

Baptisms
First Sunday of the month after the Noon Mass. Registration and Catechesis are prerequisites. Please contact the Parish Office.

Marriages
Contact the Parish Office upon engagement; at least six months is needed for preparation of this joyous sacrament!

Reconciliation & First Eucharist
Preparation for receiving the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Eucharist for the first time usually begins in first grade. Children prepare either in a Catholic school or the parish Faith Formation program. The sacraments are administered through the Parish.

Confirmation
A two-year program for freshman & sophomore-age teens. Please apply through the Youth Ministry Program.

Communion for the Sick & Homebound
St. Rita Eucharistic Ministers provide Communion home visits. Contact the Parish Office.

Anointing of the Sick & Funeral Liturgies
Please notify us for the Anointing of the Sick, the sacrament intended for the seriously ill or dying which brings Our Lord's special presence and companionship in serious time of need. If someone should die without anointing, remember that the desire to receive is sufficient.

If your loved one has passed, we will assist in making arrangements with your chose funeral director; refer you to our Bereavement Ministry and Music Ministry; and offer you helpful guidelines that will aid in the selection of readings for a Mass or Memorial Service. We know this can be a tough time and we want you to know that your parish is here for you. Please understand we only have one resident priest; sometimes arrangements for another priest may be needed.

WRITE HIS STORY

Many of you received a letter from me at the end of November regarding the "end of year giving." In that letter I referenced a song from Casting Crowns entitled "Make Room." A line from that song goes: "Is there room in your heart for God to write His story?" Like Mary and Joseph who were looking for lodging for their expectant child, God is looking for lodging in our hearts and God looks to write His story in and through us.

As I was preparing to write this Christmas reflection, I was drawn to a line in the Mass at the end of the Eucharistic Prayer when the priest elevates the host and chalice and sings (or says): "Through him, and with him, and in him, O God, almighty Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is yours, forever and ever." My reflection was that when you hear the priest says those words you might try to allow God to write His story: through you, with you and in you. This would be incredible and would further the incarnation story - the story when God became human and was alive on earth.

Allow God to write His story though you, with you and in you and allow the world to experience His presence through you and with you and in you. That is the incarnation made real today. God desires to be manifest through each one of us — as imperfect as that manifestation may be. God is presence with us here at Mass and I pray God will be present in you as you depart from Mass.

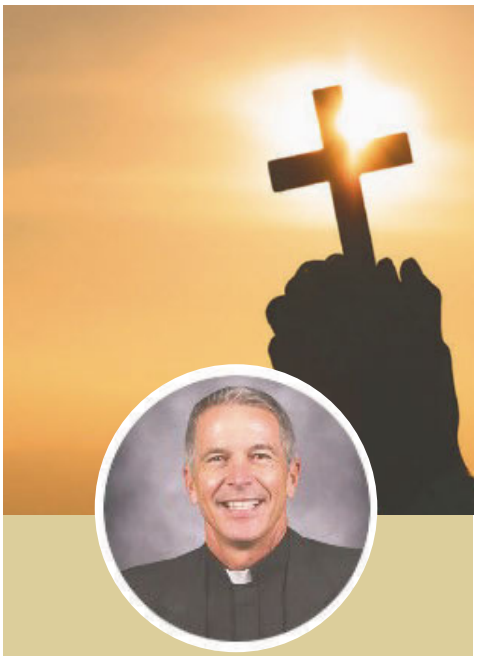
A little symbolism of this reality is shown in the Mass processions. During the entrance procession the Word of God (the Gospel Book) is carried in, but at the concluding procession it is not. That is because each person is called to carry the Word (Jesus - the Word made flesh) out into the world wherever they go. May each one of you make room for God to write His story, and may that story be carried out into a world in great need of God's presence, mercy and love.

Together with Fr. Chris, Deacon Chuck and his wife Linda, the entire Parish Staff, and Mrs. Solis and the School Faculty & Staff, may you and your loved ones have a very blessed Christmas and New Year.

—Fr. Tom

FEASTS OF THE HOLY FAMILY & THE BAPTISM

Usually the Sunday after Christmas is the celebration of the Holy Family, the following Sunday (the 1st Sunday of the new year) is Epiphany and the concluding Sunday of the Christmas season (the 2nd Sunday of January) is the Baptism of Jesus. However, when Christmas falls on Sunday (like this year) the following Sunday is January 1, the Solemnity of Mary, the Mother of God. A Solemnity is never bumped for a feast day so the Solemnity of Mary remains and the feast of the Holy Family is rescheduled, this year for Friday, December 30. January 8, the 2nd Sunday of January, becomes Epiphany (usually the 1st Sunday of January) and the Baptism of Jesus (usually the 2nd Sunday of January) is moved to Monday, January 9. On Tuesday, January 10 we return to Ordinary Time and the liturgical color of green.



FR. TOM

You have been told what is good, and what the LORD requires of you:

Only to do justice,

and to love goodness,

and to walk humbly with your God.

—Micah 6:8

MASS INTENTIONS

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24

8:00 a.m. Pakulski Family RIP

4:00 p.m. Jonathan Blakeslee INT

10:30 p.m. Ian Anthony Blakeslee RIP

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25

7:30 a.m. Bernie Grace RIP

10:00 a.m. For all parishioners

12 Noon Ana Ptasinski INT

MONDAY, DECEMBER 26

8:00 a.m. Harold & Helen Haddad RIP

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 27

8:00 a.m. Raymond & Alice Pflanzer RIP

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 28

8:00 a.m. *(Communion Service)*

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 29

8:00 a.m. *(No Communion Service)*

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 30

8:00 a.m. Roderick Hoffman RIP

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31

8:00 a.m. Dean Diomedes RIP

5:00 p.m. Kathryn Durfee INT

SUNDAY, JANUARY 1

7:30 a.m. Shawn Blakeslee INT

10:00 a.m. Betty Henry RIP

12 Noon For all parishioners

WORSHIP AID

Follow along at Mass with our worship aid, which contains all the readings and hymns for this weekend. It can be found on Facebook, or delivered to your email via our weekly e-newsletter, or you may scan this QR code to download a copy on your electronic device right now!

TODAY'S READINGS

Entrance Antiphon - Let us all rejoice in the Lord, for our Savior has been born in the world. Today true peace has come down to us from heaven.

First Reading - For a child is born to us, a son is given us; upon his shoulder dominion rests. (Isaiah 9:5)

Psalm - Today is born our Savior, Christ the Lord. (Psalm 96)

Second Reading - Beloved: The grace of God has appeared, saving all. (Titus 2:11)

Gospel - "Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord." (Luke 2:10-11)

Communion Antiphon - The Word became flesh, and we have seen his glory. (John 1:14)

Please note there will be **no livestreamed or in-person Holy Hour** this Thursday, December 29, in observance of Christmas Holidays. Holy Hour will resume with First Friday Adoration on January 6, 2023. Thank you!

Monday:	St. Stephen
Tuesday:	St. John the Apostle
Wednesday:	The Holy Innocents
Thursday:	St. Thomas Becket
Friday:	The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, & Joseph
Saturday:	St. Sylvester I

The Parish Offices will be closed in observance of the Christmas Season from **December 26 through 30**. We will reopen on **Tuesday, January 3, 2023**. Christmas blessings to you!

LITURGY • LIFE • LOVE

TAKING CHURCH OUTSIDE THE WALLS OF THE CHURCH

I think that, for most of us, Christmas is like a destination. We work and work toward making the day something so very special, and then it arrives - and then, in a flash, it seems like it's gone.

Shouldn't we hold Christmas in our hearts for more than just a day?

Jesus, God, alive and living. And guess what, Jesus is alive right here, right now, born anew in our hearts through every single word we say and every single deed we do.

Can we be the joy and love of God to the world around us?

We can.

We must.

- **Think:** How am I birthing Christ to the world today? How will I bring His love to life tomorrow?
- **Pray:** Dear God of New Life, thank you for the best Christmas present of all. Please, help me keep this joy and love in my life not just for a day, but forever. Amen.
- **Go:** "Rejoice. Be not afraid. Share the good news."

Let's go be the best Gospel anyone has ever read.
Peace and love and the joy of Christmas to you—yes... today and forever.

— Paul Puccinelli

Be sure to check out Paul's daily reflections on the Gospel, posted each morning on the St. Rita Parish Facebook page.

PRAYER LIST

FOR OUR PARISHIONERS

Inez Aus
Bob Singleton
Barbara LeVeque
Rayauna Melkonian
Lionel Rowan
Abigail Peterson
Alvin Nash
Maureen McMahon
Sandy Rios
Camilo Greer
George Sheasby
Mark Rivard
Ana Ptasinski
Molly Grow
Myles Avery
Adrian Guerrero
Olivia Guerrero
Rita Levonian
Walter Shedd
Jim Gerstenberg
Sr. Rita McKernan
Roxanne Barker
June DePasco
Noel Wychico
Peggy Townsend
Len Verner
John Taylor
Verna Monteleone
Melinda Anderson
Dick Anderson
Anthony Smith
Jodi Heath
Joe Hernandez
Beto Acosta
Joe Moody
Michael Joseph Parada
Josephine Gruppie
Gilbert Gonzalez
Mary Kiss
John Sawtelle
Inez Ybarra
Jacquie Marshall
Jim Martin
Maria Blust
Pete Olson
Daisy Olson
Lalo Arriaga
Luz Arriaga
Jim Crilly
Trini Marti
Toni Navarro
Tonyja Blakeslee
Fred Mycroft

FOR THE DECEASED

Please remember in your prayers the family of:

Carol Alcorn
Dorothy Van Gorden
Timothy Evans Gatlin
Dorothy Jerneycic

THE CHOSEN

Join us for a weekly watch party and group study of the life of Christ. This is a Gospel immersion experience that will stay with you and make you want more!

WEDNESDAY EVENINGS
7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

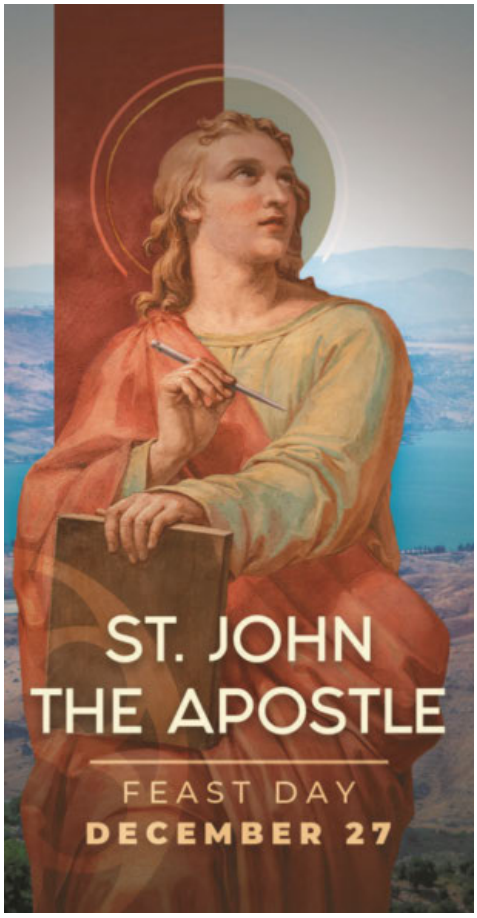
St. Rita Parish Office
(50 East Alegria Ave.)
All adults (18+) are welcome!

The RCIA team presents weekly sessions on Tuesdays from 7:30—9:00 p.m. in the Parish Office Meeting Room. All adults (18+) are welcome to join us! Upcoming topics include:

- *No meeting 12/27: Christmas Break*
- Sacraments of Vocation (1/3)
- Hebrew Scriptures (1/10)
- Eucharist (1/17)

To inquire more about the Catholic faith, please contact **Deacon Chuck McDaniels** at **rcia@st-rita.org.**

SAINT OF THE WEEK: JOHN THE APOSTLE



Saint John was one of the Twelve, part of Jesus' inner circle, among the few that witnessed the Transfiguration, the raising of Jairus' daughter, and the Agony in the garden at Gethsemane. He and his brother James were the sons of Zebedee and Salome. When Jesus called them, they left their father mending nets and followed him. Jesus called the brothers "Boanerges," meaning "sons of thunder" — they were passionate in their faith and Jesus had to rebuke them for their fiery zeal on more than one occasion. John, the younger brother, possibly the youngest disciple, was the only one present at Jesus' death.

Saint John the Apostle is traditionally thought to be the author of the fifth Gospel, the three Epistles of John, and the Book of Revelation. However, there has been some debate among scholars from antiquity to the present. Tradition also gives him the title Beloved Disciple and John's Gospel sees him seated next to Jesus at the last supper and the one to whom Jesus gives the care of Mary at the crucifixion.

Although Church tradition says that John survived the other disciples, living a long life, much of it is steeped in myth and legend. Some say he retired to Ephesus after the crucifixion with Mary and remained there until he died. But in other traditions he is more active. For a time he remained in Jerusalem with the other disciples, then founded churches in Asia Minor. In a legend of his persecution, during the reign of the Emperor Domitian, John is taken to Rome and thrown into a cauldron of boiling oil but preserved from death. He is then exiled to the island of Patmos where the Book of Revelation was written.

Most accounts agree that after his exile and the Assumption of Mary he returned to Ephesus where he died sometime after 98, during the reign of the Emperor Trajan.

PRAYER FOR PASTORAL PLANNING

And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up.

—Galatians 6:9

Good and loving God,
We, the people of St. Rita Parish, thank you for the blessings You have graciously poured down upon us. For over 100 years You have guided our parish and for this we thank and honor You. As we work together to form priorities for the coming years, bless our deliberations and guide our efforts. As disciples of Jesus, assist us in our parish mission to be a community that lives by faith, is known by love and is a voice of hope. With the intercession of St. Rita, remove anything that may impede our progress and bless all that we do. We pray this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

SUPPORT ST. RITA BY GIVING ONLINE

"Consider this: The person who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the person who sows generously will also reap generously. Each person should do as he has decided in his heart—not reluctantly or out of necessity, for God loves a cheerful giver." (2 Corinthians 9:6-7)

Scan this QR Code with your smartphone to make an online donation. Thank you for your generosity and continued financial support!

LEAVE A LEGACY

Remember St. Rita Catholic Parish in your Will

Prayer for Peace in Ukraine

O Prince of Peace,
Once more we hear the guns of war,
Once more we see the faces
Of frightened children.

We pray for the people of Ukraine,
That they may be granted peace;
We pray for the people of Russia,
That they may demand peace;
We pray for our country,
That we may be a positive part
Of peacemaking in this world.

O Prince of Peace,
Lead us from this dark time
To a deeper understanding
Of the global human family,
So all may break bread together
In the secure embrace of peace.

Amen.

—Jane Deren, Ph.D.

St. Rita Catholic Parish is now on Instagram!

Follow us at **www.instagram.com/SaintRitaSM**

BULLETIN DEADLINE

14 days before desired publication date, during the holiday season.

bulletin@st-rita.org
(626) 355-1292 x226

RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE

JANUARY 22 FROM 8:30 A.M.—2:30 P.M. IN O'MALLEY HALL

One pint of donated blood can save three lives—will you help? The Red Cross is sponsoring a blood drive on **Sunday, January 22**. Please visit **RedCrossBlood,org** and enter sponsor code **StRita** to sign up, or scan this QR code to schedule an appointment. You can also streamline your donation experience and save up to 15 minutes by visiting RedCrossBlod.org/RapidPass to complete your pre-donation reading and health history questions on the day of your appointment. Give the gift of life!

SIGN UP FOR OUR WEEKLY E-BLAST!

Would you like to receive our parish news directly to your email inbox? Our weekly newsletter is sent on Wednesdays, and is a brief, prayerful glance at all the news and events happening in our parish community. It contains livestreaming links, downloadable bulletins and worship aids, and other useful information.

If you are interested in receiving this wonderful resource, you can sign up to be placed on the list by sending an email to **reception@st-rita.org**. If you have any questions, please call the **Parish Office** at **(626) 355-1292**.

NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

The school, mindful of its mission to be a witness to the love of Christ for all, admits students regardless of race, color, national origin, and/or ethnic origin to all rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school.

The school does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, disability, medical condition, sex, or national and/or ethnic origin in the administration of educational policies and practices, scholarship programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs, although certain athletic leagues and other programs may limit participation and some archdiocesan schools operate as single-sex schools.

While the school does not discriminate against students with special needs, a full range of services may not always be available to them. Decisions concerning the admission and continued enrollment of a student in the school are based upon the student's emotional, academic, and physical abilities and the resources available to the school in meeting the student's needs.

[Note that this School Student Non-Discrimination Policy does not provide nor imply that the archdiocese waives any legal exceptions or exemptions that may apply to it as a religious nonprofit organization.]

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CALENDAR & EVENTS

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
25 **Nativity of the Lord** Normal Mass Schedule **Christmas Day**	26 **Christmas Holiday: Parish & School Offices Closed**	27	28	29	30	31 **3:30p** Confessions
1 **Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God** Normal Mass Schedule **New Year's Day**	2 **NYD Observed**	3 **7:30p** RCIA	4	5 **7p** Choir Rehearsal	6 **12p** Livestreamed Adoration **First Friday**	7 **3:30p** Confessions **5p** Yr2 Confirmation Session & Mass
8 **Epiphany of the Lord** Normal Mass Schedule **10a** Yr1 Confirmation Session & Mass **Family Faith Sunday Preschool & CLOW**	9 **4:15p** Family Faith Formation	10 **7:30p** RCIA	11 **5:30p** EDGE Session **7p** Youth Nite **7p** The Chosen	12 **12p** Livestreamed Holy Hour **7p** Choir Rehearsal	13	14 **3:30p** Confessions

NEWSNOTES: CATHOLIC COMMUNITY & LOCAL EVENTS

ST. FRANCIS HIGH SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE: JANUARY 7, 2023

St. Francis High School will welcome prospective students and their parents to campus for its annual Open House outdoors on Saturday, January 7, 2023, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. We invite everyone from the community to join us to learn more about the benefits of a Capuchin Franciscan college preparatory education. You can view the campus, interact with our students, teachers and coaches, and participate in panel discussions.

St. Francis High School is a Catholic, college preparatory school for boys in grades 9-12. Since its founding by the Capuchin Franciscan Friars in 1946, it has been committed to enriching the mind and heart, strengthening respect through service and humility, creating a brotherhood, and envisioning men of virtue and peace. For more information, please call **(818) 790-0325**.

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Diane Scalzo, Realtor/CCS

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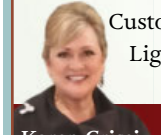

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