Helping the Hungry

Santa Maria’s Christmas food drive for St. Peter Martyr

104 years after the parish began, Pittsburg’s St. Peter Martyr Church is packed at its eight weekend Masses. St. Peter began by serving Italian immigrants as coal mining, ranching, fishing, canning, and manufacturing grew in the area. Today, it mostly serves first- and second-generation Hispanic families. Many parishioners live near the economic edge, working low-paying jobs with modest benefits and uncertain hours.

The parish attends to both spiritual and material needs of all its parishioners, with the food pantry, educational and civic involvement, attention to human and civil rights, and a parochial school.

The parish food pantry is a critical ministry that helps many families keep good meals on the table. Maintaining a stocked food pantry is a challenge—especially this time of the year, when its stocks are low and demand is high.

This Christmas season, Santa Maria parishioners can help our brothers and sisters in Pittsburg by contributing food to help restock the food pantry!

Please put together a box or bag of groceries to help replenish St. Peter’s food pantry, and bring them to church December 21 and 22.

Our Santa Maria Knights of Columbus will receive food donations after the 5pm Mass on Saturday, December 21, and the 8:30am and 10:30am Masses on Sunday, December 22. They will deliver them to Pittsburg. Please be generous!
Sunday collection or bring them by the Parish Office.

Here we come a-caroling!

On Monday, December 16th, members of our parish choir will be caroling at the Orinda Senior Village and the Orinda Care Center (formerly Orinda Convalescent Hospital). The morning of Christmas songs begins at 10am at the Orinda Senior Village. If you would like to sing with us, contact Tony at tmillette@smparish.org.

In the Western Church, the young woman is titled “Mother of God.” This signifies a relationship: a loving, nurturing relationship. We know that it encompassed both a mother’s tenderness in raising a young man, and also the horror of seeing her son tortured and put to death on the Cross.

Yes, she was a mother—and Mother of God.

A Holy Day for a “calendar-shattering” event

It is fitting that on New Year’s Day, we celebrate the calendar-shattering event in human history: the extraordinary role that a young woman in Galilee played in God’s plan for the human race.

Your responses help us plan our mission in action

As we begin a new church year, we are also looking ahead to the 2020 budget year. The pledges promised on your Commitment Cards help us budget for another year of ministry, service, education, faith formation, worship, and more for our parish community!

Thank you to the parishioners who have responded (as of this printing) with their Commitment Card for our His Heart, Our Hands program! We are humbled by your sacrifice and are grateful for your generosity.

This number includes those who have made a financial commitment to our parish as well as those who have pledged to pray for the program.

PASTORAL CARE

Bible Reading a blessing

A reflection by Mari Kay Breazeale

My part in the Pastoral Care Ministry of Santa Maria is the Bible Reading at the Orinda Care Center (formerly the Orinda Convalescent Hospital). Because I’ve long been interested in and involved in Scripture Study, this is a ministry that I greatly enjoy.
The patients, and sometimes even the staff, in attendance seem to appreciate my being there, so I feel doubly blessed. My participation is just one Wednesday a month, and other parishioners do the other weeks.

If you enjoy working with elderly people, whether Bible Reading or not, let Sister Mary Magdalene know. She will find something rewarding for you to do, too.

Contact Sr. Mary Magdalene at sistermn@smparish.org or at 925-254-2426.

OUTREACH

Spirit of Giving helped another 14 families

CYO and Youth Ministry’s annual Spirit of Giving program with Contra Costa Interfaith Housing was another success!

14 families who participate in CCIH’s housing programs, many of whom are single-parent families or are transitioning out of homelessness, were gifted with wrapped and tagged Christmas presents, holiday cards, and grocery gift cards for their Christmas feast.

Pictured to the left is our 7th grade Girls American team, who sponsored two families. Other participants included YM families and even the Parent Bible Study group!

Please keep all the recipient families in your prayers this Advent and Christmas season!

For more information on our annual Christmas service project, contact megan@smparish.org.

Christmas Food Boxes by the Knights of Columbus

Please see the front page of the bulletin for more details on another Christmas service project!

Weekly Food Collection

1st/2nd Weekends: St. Cornelius School
3rd/4th Weekends: St. Peter Martyr Church Pantry

Please put all donations in the bins in the Narthex.
We encourage you to register in the parish so that you can receive regular communication via both email and regular mail. Registration information is essential for responding to request to be sponsors/godparents and other ministries.

Please register at www.santamariaorinda.com/registration
The 12 Days of Christmas Party

Thank you to everyone who joined us at our annual Parish Christmas Party last week! Thanks especially to the planning committee for making it happen!