St. Catherine of Siena Catholic Church
Nativity of Saint John the Baptist
Martinez, California, June 24, 2018

St. Catherine of Siena Parish follows Jesus by welcoming all, sharing our gifts & giving glory to God.
**PARISH & SCHOOL STAFF**

| Fr. Anthony Huong Le, Parochial Administrator | Deacon David Holland  
dcnholland@yahoo.com |
|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Deacon Albert Dizon  
dcnadizon@yahoo.com | Pre-School Director  
scpre@comcast.net |
| Mary Pult, Interim Principal  
mpult@csdo.org | Director Religious Education  
drescath@yahoo.com |
| Saint Catherine Elementary School | Safe Environment Coordinator  
drescath@yahoo.com |
| RCIA Parish Office | Andrea Watkins  
stcathmtz@yahoo.com |
| stcathmtz@yahoo.com | Director of Music Ministry  
diana_palmer@comcast.net |
| Michael Chio | Sylvia Lloren  
sylvia_lloren@comcast.net |
| Director of Music Ministry | Secretary  
sylvia_lloren@comcast.net |

**CHURCH LOCATION:** 606 Mellus Street, Martinez, CA  
**PARISH OFFICE AND MAILING ADDRESS:** 1125 Ferry Street, Martinez, CA 94553-1720  
**TELEPHONE / FAX:** 925-228-2230 / 925-228-1318  
**PARISH WEBSITE:** www.stcmtz.org  
**PARISH EMAIL:** stcathmtz@yahoo.com  
**SUBMISSIONS:** bulletinsubmissions@gmail.com  
**OFFICE HOURS:** Mon-Fri 8:30 AM-1PM & 2 PM-5 PM  
**GRAMMAR SCHOOL:** 604 Mellus Street, Martinez, CA  
**TELEPHONE / FAX:** 925-228-4140 / 925-228-0697  
**SCHOOL WEBSITE:** http://school.stcatherinemartinez.com/  
**PRE SCHOOL:** 1125 Ferry Street, Martinez, CA  
**TELEPHONE / FAX:** 925-229-2255 / 925-229-2474  
**SAFE ENVIRONMENT:** www.virtusonline.org

**BAPTISMS:** Registration is mandatory two months prior to Baptism. Parents & Godparents are required to attend a mandatory Baptism preparation class before reception of the Sacrament.  
**MARRIAGES:** Arrangements and mandatory preparation need to be arranged at least eight months prior to the wedding.  
**FUNERALS:** We recommend using Catholic Funeral and Cemetery Services at 925-932-0900. A representative will contact the parish office to coordinate your arrangements.  
**BULLETIN SUBMISSIONS:** To place an announcement in the bulletin, email request to: bulletinsubmissions@gmail.com. The deadline for requests is no later than noon on Fridays one week prior to the date of the bulletin in which the announcement is requested to appear. Please submit requests in advance of the event date and the deadline. Submissions should be brief and will be edited and approved by parish clergy before being published. Allow ample time for the approval process. Every attempt will be made to include the submission when requested; though, not all submissions are guaranteed placement. Marketing flyers/announcements must have approval in the form of a signature from the Pastor, Principal, or Deacon before posting on the premises; and fundraisers must have the name of the designated beneficiary of the proceeds; as well as followed by a gratitude submission which includes the amount of profits raised. The kiosk bulletin board outside the hall is for the parish use for Diocesan, Parish, School, and group announcements.  
**EARLY DEADLINES:** Closely watch early deadlines imposed by the publisher and plan ahead accordingly. Deadline for July I has passed. The next deadline for submissions for the weekend July 8 all items must be submitted by FRI JUNE 29 by noon. Please direct your inquiries to the email above. Thank you.

**APPLICATION DEADLINES:** The next deadline for submissions for the weekend  
**SAT 6/23**  
**SUN 6/24**  
**MON 6/25**  
**TUE 6/26**  
**WED 6/27**  
**FRI 6/29**  
**SAT 6/30**  
**SUN 7/1**

**CATECHETICAL CONGRESS OAKLAND DIOCESE**  
**SAT, AUG 11, 8:15 AM TO 4 PM**  
**BISHOP O’DOWD HIGH SCHOOL, OAKLAND**  
**EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION:** $35 ends JUL 15  
**LATE REGISTRATION:** $40  
**QUESTIONS:** PCOLLYER@OAKDIOCESE.ORG  
**SPEAKERS INCLUDE:**  
**THE VP OF LIFE TEEN, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF COURAGE INTERNATIONAL, DIRECTOR OF EVANGELIZATION & PARISH LIFE FOR MIAMI ARCHDIOCESE, BISHOP BARBER & LOCAL EXPERTS**  
**REGISTER:** www.oakdiocese.org/congress

**READY TO PLAY BASKETBALL?**  
Saint Catherine CYO Basketball 2018-19  
**Registration is open July 1st to August 31st**  
**Open to girls and boys, 2nd to 8th grades**  
**Please visit CYO website for eligibility and pricing info:** www.stcmtzcyo.org

The world’s greatest need is not more Christians, but more Christians who practice their Christianity.

**CATHOLIC FUNERAL & CEMETERY SERVICES**  
Deacon Dave Holland, Ministry of the Diocese of Oakland, will be discussing after Masses on SAT/SUN JUN 30 / JUL 1 in the Parish Hall, the spiritual and practical reasons for learning about Catholic funeral burial services.

**PARISH STEWARDSHIP**  
**June 17, 2018**  
**CONTRIBUTIONS**

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<td>Respect Life</td>
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Thank you for your continued generosity!  
**REMEMBER ST. CATHERINE PARISH IN YOUR WILL & LIVING TRUST**
CHRISTIANS, SPEAK AND ACT LIKE A PROPHET

Dear friends in Christ,

Do you know the meaning of the word “prophet”? If you know it, well good for you. If it sounds ancient to you and you vaguely recall its meaning, I do not blame you. Frankly, it is a word less talked about in this smartphone era. Paradoxically, this word no Christians should ever forget because if one does not know this word and its meaning, one runs the risk of not living out one’s own Christian mission.

How? Let us rediscover its meaning together then.

The Hebrew word for prophet, “nabi” can have both a passive and an active meaning (“one who has been called” and “one who calls”). The former meaning focuses on the personal experience of the prophet, while the latter concentrates on the role the prophet plays in the community. A prophet can be called from all walks of life.

A prophet is someone who is chosen to speak for God. Those first prophets chosen to speak for God are Abraham (Gen 20:7), Aaron (Exodus 7:1), and the greatest of all Moses (Deut. 34:10). Some prophets are chosen to help the establishment of Israel’s monarchy, to appoint and anoint the king, to judge the people, and to intercede on the people’s behalf. Samuel was chosen to do exactly this (1 Sam 3:20). Others announce judgment (2 Sam 12:1:15), appoint and anoint kings and their succession, or act as advisors (in case of Nathan, 1 Kings 1:22-27). Others act as a kind of father to the community (in the case of Elisha).

More specifically, true prophets were called and commissioned directly by God from whom they received the divine word or communication in forms of visions, dreams, and audible encounters or locutions to the people. Thus, the prophets were impelled to live, act, and proclaim the given message whenever they felt compelled to do so either at the market place or at the royal cour.

The prophets delivered God’s word of judgment, condemnation, and repentance, and salvation in the face of Israel’s infidelity and forgetfulness of God (Amos2:6-7; Isa 5:7).

The prophets were also involved directly and actively in the life community whether it was social, religious, or political establishment. They somewhat lived as the embodiment of the given message.

Isaiah is an example. About the second half of 8th century B.C., Isaiah, one of the greatest prophets of the Old Testament, appeared in a critical moment in Israel’s history. Isaiah was chosen to the prophetic office in the Temple of Jerusalem (Isaiah 6) when Israel was confronted with the powerful invaders of Sennacherib. In addition to that, the king of Judah had just died.

The problem of Israel was somewhat hinted in the call of Isaiah. Though he acknowledged himself as a sinful and unfit person to hold the office, the holiness and glory of God represented by the purifying coal of the Seraphim, cleansed and prepared Isaiah for the office. Like Isaiah, Israel must be cleansed and purified again and again so that the nation as the firstborn son of God was able to bear the witness to the fidelity and goodness of God.

First, Isaiah was commissioned by God to expose the immorality of Judah and its capital. Second, when Ahaz assumed the kingship (735-715 B.C.), Isaiah served as the king’s advisor. A weak and sinful king, Ahaz failed to protect the nation from the invasion of the Syro-Ephraimites and turned to Assyria for help. At this point, this exposed the king’s lack of faith in God and made known the prophecy of the coming of the Emmanuel (Is. 7). This prophecy was later fulfilled in the coming of Jesus Christ.

Third, the reign of king Hezekiah (715-687 B.C.), with the support of the prophet, the king launched a religious reform. However, the king signed a covenant with the Egyptians. This was seen as a betrayal and infidelity to God to which the prophet judged it to be the “covenant with death.” Facing this situation, the prophet summoned the nation once again to faith in God as their only hope. Even attacked by the enemies (Assyrians), the city was protected as promised. In this way, the prophet reaffirmed the faith of Israel in God who is the Lord of history and the enemies of Israel are not less than God’s stools.

In the final analysis, Isaiah is the voice of the one who called and reminded Israel of their powerful and faithful Yahweh, who is their only hope:

Fear not, I am with you;
be not dismayed; I am your God.
I will strengthen you, and help you,
and uphold you with My right hand of justice
(Is 41:10).

In the time of Jesus, we encounter another prophet who was “the voice in the desert” calling people to repentance and acceptance of Jesus as the Lamb of God, the promised Messiah, who takes away the sins of the world. Thanks to his prophetic voice, many turned away from their sinful way of life and followed the true Christ, who is the truth, the way, and the life.

The same Jesus Christ who later gathered a community of disciples, the Church. He chose and sent them to proclaim the Good News to all nations and baptize them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. The Church is the new Israel betrothed to Christ as the Bridegroom whose life has been offered for her sake and of the whole world. She is charged with the prophetic mission that is to speak for God and for the world before God.

Those who belong to the Church by baptism share the same prophetic mission. Each in his or her own Christian state of life is called to live it out. This prophetic calling must entail the willingness to swim against the ungodly currents so that to bear authentic witness to the truth of the apostolic faith, the Gospel of Jesus. In other words, not being a prophet is not living as a Christian in the world.

With His help, may we, Christians, learn to speak, live, and act with a prophetic voice.

Sincerely,

Rev. Anthony Huong Le
VISIT OF THE PILGRIM CROSS

The replica of the Pilgrim Cross brought by the Spaniards to the Philippine shore in 1521, is set to arrive at St. Catherine Parish on Friday, July 6 at 5:30 PM. The reception of the Pilgrim Cross will include a prayer service with singing, recitation of the Holy Rosary, Divine Mercy Chaplet, and ending with the Official Prayer for the 5th Centenary of Filipino Catholic Evangelization.

There will be a prayer service every night from July 6 to July 20 from 5:30 PM to 6:30 PM in the church. On Saturday, July 7 at the 4:30 PM Mass, there will be a procession with the Rite of Welcome of the Pilgrim Cross, as well as prayers to commemorate the 5th Centenary of Filipino Catholic Evangelization.

This Diocesan Jubilee celebration is a Filipino custom for all Catholics to embrace and not exclusive for any one culture. The Catholic faith that was introduced in the Philippines almost 500 years ago is the same faith that we all find meaning in; and it is expressed and celebrated in different ways. Bishop Michael C. Barber SJ envisions all to join the celebration of this momentous event.

For more details, please contact Deacon Albert Dizon

Natural Family Planning Classes
An introduction to Natural Family Planning, a form of family planning which conforms to Catholic teaching, is being offered on Sat, September 8 from 1 PM to 4 PM @ Real Options

Obria Medical Clinic, 33523 Western Avenue, Union City. The session is FREE and open to engaged and married couples, clergy and religious. For more information call 510-271-1936.

The Communications Committee had depleted its supply of faith sharing articles! Won’t you consider submitting one?

HOW TO SUBMIT AN ARTICLE FOR FAITH SHARING:
Consider sharing with us your faith journey, your walk with Our Lord. How has He worked in you for the good of others? Articles should be between 300-500 words, your own testimonial to your Catholic faith, and submitted with a portrait to FaithSharingSCS@gmail.com. By making a personal submission to the bulletin, you agree to having your words edited, printed, and shared by the Parish and Communications Committee and agree to a photo release of your image. Consider this, please.

MINISTRY LEADER HANDBOOK WORKSHOP
Next Saturday, June 30 from 10 AM to 2 PM has been set aside for Ministry Leaders to have an opportunity to ask questions regarding the handbook that has recently been distributed to heads of ministries, organizations and groups. Bring your handbook and your questions to the parish hall. For a copy of the handbook visit the parish website at www.stcmtz.org

St. Catherine Parish offers deepest sympathy and prayers for the family; and, the repose of the soul of

Helen Tonti
Velma Costa
who entered eternal life.
PRAYER FOR REFUGEES

God of our wandering ancestors, long have we known that your heart is with the refugee: that you were born into a family of refugees fleeing violence in their homeland, who then gathered up their hungry child and fled into alien country. Their cry, your cry, resounds through the ages: "Will you let me in?" Give us hearts that break open when our brothers and sisters turn to us with that same cry. Then surely all these things will follow:

Ears will no longer turn deaf to their voices.
Eyes will see a moment for grace instead of a threat.
Tongues will not be silenced, but will instead advocate. And, Hands will reach out — working for peace in their homelands, working for justice in the lands where they seek safe haven.

Lord, protect all refugees in their travels. May they find a friend in me, and so make me worthy of the refuge I have found in you. Amen.

This prayer is excerpted from the Solidarity Vigil for Refugees at www.crs.org/resource-center/solidarity-prayer-vigil-refugees

Reason deceives us; conscience, never.
—Jean Jacques Rousseau

Magnificat SOTI, a Ministry to Catholic Women
June Prayer Breakfast
Saturday, June 30 @ 9:30 AM
Crowne Plaza Concord
45 John Glenn Drive

Guest Speaker: Susan Potvin, adoption advocate and Leader of “Living Praise & Worship”
Reservations: Jennifer 503-709-8449

We are a group of 18-35 year olds creating a place to learn and share with one another. When so much change and growth happens at this time in our lives, we are interested in providing spiritual nourishment for navigating the modern world and our roles within it. We wrestle with questions of faith in context, build community, and participate in active ministry, all while having fun! Want to join us? See Fr. Anthony or email Rosemarycook95@gmail.com

I want to offer a few words of thanks for all those who put together the “Evening of Appreciation” prayer service and reception for our St. Catherine of Siena volunteers. May God bless you in your continued service to our parish. —Fr. Anthony Le

Northern California Kickoff for Catholic Youth & Young Adult Ministry
nor-cal-jam-2018
SAT. SEP. 15, 9am to 9pm @ Six Flags Discovery Kingdom, Vallejo
tickets & info: www.onfirenorcal.com
Co-sponsored by the Diocese of Fresno, Monterey, Oakland, Reno, Sacramento, Santa Rosa, Stockton & Archdiocese of San Francisco

SCS ACCESS: Go to Internet Explorer and click https://formed.org. Enter Code: XPTJK8 (case sensitive)

Fathers are the link between heaven and earth and are intended to be an image of our Heavenly Father. Drawing on the examples of St. Joseph, Devin Schadt shows us how to become a father on earth like our Father in heaven. Devin is a husband, a father of five, and the co-founder of the Fathers of St. Joseph, an apostolate dedicated to the renewal of authentic fatherhood.

SCS ACCESS: Go to Internet Explorer and click https://formed.org. Enter Code: XPTJK8 (case sensitive)

SAINT CATHERINE OF SIENA PARISH BOOK CLUB
Join a community in engaging with themes and questions of Catholic faith through literature. Hosted guided reading and discussion of fiction and non-fiction books in communal text-based spiritual nourishment. Read along or read on your own time. Participate in guided reading every month or choose time when scheduling allows. Whether you read alone, with your family, or attend our discussions, all are welcome to share in our literary journey.

JULY: “CATHERINE OF SIENA: A PASSIONATE LIFE” —DON BROPHY
Read up to Ch. 7 discuss on Sun. Jul 8 or Thu. Jul 12
Read up to Ch.13, discuss on Sun. Jul 22 or Thu. Jul 26

FOR MORE INFO CONTACT ROSEMARYCOOK95@GMAIL.COM

Facebook.com/oakdiocese www.facebook.com/oakdiocese
Twitter.com/oakdiocese www.twitter.com/oakdiocese
Linkedin: Diocese of Oakland www.linkedin.com/company/diocese-of-oakland
er, do you have a question about the mechanics of the Mass, the traditions, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, or its teachings? Submit your questions to bulletinsubmissions@gmail.com and insert “Q&A” in the subject line. Questions will be answered by members of the clergy and/or those with knowledge of the subject inquiry.

**LITURGY SCHEDULE**

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<tr>
<th>DAY</th>
<th>TIME</th>
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<tr>
<td>SATURDAY</td>
<td>8:00 AM and 4:30 PM</td>
<td>8:00 AM Children’s Liturgy of the Word</td>
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<td>7:00 AM</td>
<td>10:30 AM</td>
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<td>12:30 PM Spanish</td>
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<td>WEEKDAYS*</td>
<td>8:00 AM</td>
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<td>*Note: Thursday is a Communion Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>HOLY DAYS</td>
<td>8:00 AM, 12:10 PM and 7:00 PM</td>
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<td>ADORATION</td>
<td>Fridays from 12:00 PM to 5:00 PM</td>
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<tr>
<td>RECONCILIATION</td>
<td>Saturdays from 3:00 PM to 4:00 PM</td>
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**WEEK-AT-A-GLANCE**

**MINISTRIES/ORGANIZATIONS CONTACTS**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>MINISTRY/ORGANIZATION</th>
<th>CONTACT INFORMATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Altar Servers</td>
<td>925-957-0437</td>
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<td>Art and Environment</td>
<td>925-200-6300</td>
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<td>Bethesda</td>
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<td>Binga</td>
<td>925-858-7330</td>
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<tr>
<td>Catholic Youth Organization - CYO</td>
<td>925-817-9429</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gina Marks</td>
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<tr>
<td>Children's Liturgy of the Word</td>
<td>925-212-7465</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debbie Frieberg</td>
<td>925-228-6460</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communications</td>
<td>925-370-8143</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eugene Dizon</td>
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<tr>
<td>Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion</td>
<td>925-228-2230</td>
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<tr>
<td>Viviana &amp; Marty Magee</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faith Formation - Religious Education (PreK-8th Grades)</td>
<td>Ext 30 925-228-2230</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andrea Watkins</td>
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<td>Finance</td>
<td>925-229-4158</td>
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<tr>
<td>Don Brocca</td>
<td>925-335-9395</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grief Ministry/Card Ministry</td>
<td>925-229-2665</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mary Cook</td>
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<tr>
<td>Guadalupe Society</td>
<td>925-997-2432</td>
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<td>Guadalupe/Cruz</td>
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<td>Hospital of Homebound</td>
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<td>Tom Greeney/Legion of Mary</td>
<td>925-228-4387</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ignite</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cindy Buscaglia</td>
<td>925-787-8396</td>
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<tr>
<td>Italian Catholic Federation - ICF</td>
<td>925-348-2620</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tom Cook</td>
<td>925-229-2665</td>
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<td>Knights of Columbus - K of C</td>
<td>925-334-2429</td>
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<td>La Communidad Latina</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lucia Cruz</td>
<td>925-348-2620</td>
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<td>Lectors</td>
<td>925-370-8143</td>
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<td>Deacon Albert Dizon</td>
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HOW TO SUBMIT AN ENTRY FOR SAINTS AMONG US:

Did you catch someone or group doing something good? Helping our neighbors in need? Acts of faith in and around our parish and school? Please let us know about it by emailing bulletinsubmissions@gmail.com and insert “Saints Among Us” in the subject line.

HOW TO SUBMIT A QUESTION:

Whether young or younger, do you have a question about the mechanics of the Mass, the traditions, the Catechism of the Catholic Church, or its teachings? Submit your questions to bulletinsubmissions@gmail.com and insert “Q&A” in the subject line. Questions will be answered by members of the clergy and/or those with knowledge of the subject inquiry.
**READINGS & REFLECTIONS FOR THE WEEK**

**SUNDAY, JUN 24, 2018: SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST** Discovering the mystery of you

Each newborn child is a mystery about to unfold in the world. Always there is the potential for joy and pain, great good or tremendous misery. A good bit of what the child becomes is contained in the context of the family: its resources, stability, and capacity to nurture. Parents and children together become what they would never have been without the challenge and the privilege of their relationship. John might never have become the Baptist without Elizabeth and Zechariah. What parts of yourself do you owe to those who took that journey of trust with you?

Today’s readings: Day: Isaiah 49:1-6; Acts 13:22-26; Luke 1:57-66, 80 (587). “All who heard these things took them to heart, saying, ‘What, then, will this child be?’”

**MON, JUN 25, 2018: Judge not It's a well-known part of Christian faith that you shouldn't judge (though of course that hasn’t stopped many Christians from doing just that!). Most people understand the command not to judge others as a moral issue: Unless you’ve never done anything deserving of judgment, don’t dole it out to others. But it’s also a theological issue—about God. Judgment belongs to God, so not judging becomes a matter of faith: If you believe in and respect God, then don’t judge.

Today’s readings: 2 Kings 17:5-8, 13-15a, 18; Matthew 7:1-5 (371). “Remove the wooden beam from your eye first; then you will see clearly to remove the splinter from your brother’s eye.”

**TUE, JUN 26, 2018: Show yourself the door During a tour of San Francesco Basilica in Assisi, Italy, a friar took a group of pilgrims through the upper and lower churches and to the crypt where Saint Francis and his companions were buried. Throughout the tour he talked about the life of Francis and the architecture, art, and history connected to him. At the end the friar brought the group back to the upper church and showed them the stunning frescoes attributed to Giotto illustrating scenes from scripture and Francis’ life. As he guided the group to the exit he explained that on this wall was the most important scene yet: the door! The exit, he said, is a reminder to go through the doors and spread the Good News to the whole world. Something to think about next time you exit a church!

Today’s readings: 2 Kings 19:9b-11, 14-21, 31-35a, 36; Matthew 7:6, 12-14 (372). “Enter through the narrow gate.”

**WED, JUN 27, 2018: MEMORIAL OF CYRIL OF ALEXANDRIA, BISHOP, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH** Mother of all role models

Bishop Cyril (c. 374-444) was a scholar and writer who promoted the use of the title Theotokos (“God-bearer”) for Mary, the mother of Jesus. The Council of Ephesus in 431 approved the name, which is used to this day in the Eastern and Orthodox Catholic traditions. In the West, “Mother of God” is more common, but religious historian Jaroslav Pelikan offered a translation that comes closer to the original meaning: “The one who gives birth to the one who is God.” However you choose to address the courageous woman who dared to say, “Thy will be done,” you honor her most by responding in the same way to God’s invitation in your life.

Today’s readings: 2 Kings 22:8-13; 23:1-3; Matthew 7:15-20 (373). “Every good tree bears good fruit.”

**THU, JUN 28, 2018: MEMORIAL OF IRENAEUS, BISHOP, MARTYR** Think before you act

The church calendar identifies the second-century saint Irenaeus as a “bishop and martyr.” He was certainly a bishop (of Lyons in France), but his martyrdom may be more legendary. He is remembered primarily, though, not for his death but for what he did in life. His era was a time when Christian doctrine was a boiling cauldron of sometimes wildly conflicting ideas, and it was not clear what would rise to the top. As a theologian, Irenaeus’ efforts to defend what was emerging as orthodox dogma made him one of the first people to think about Christi-anity systematically. Irenaeus teaches us that before we condemn a position we should seek to understand it.

Today’s readings: 2 Kings 24:8-17; Matthew 7:21-29 (374). “The crowds were astonished at Jesus’ teaching, for he taught them as one having authority.”

**FRI, JUN 29, 2018: SOLEMNITY OF PETER AND PAUL, APOSTLES** Rock of ages

The pallium is an ancient liturgical vestment worn only by the pope and a very few other high church officials on whom the pope bestows it as a symbol of the jurisdiction delegated to them. In honor of Saints Peter and Paul, today is the day of the liturgical year on which these officials receive this symbol of their office. In its current form it is a narrow band of white lamb’s wool from sheep raised by Trappist monks, looped and draped over other liturgical vestments. The pallium is a reminder of the serious duty placed on the shoulders of the highest church leaders. Pray today that they may fulfill their offices wisely, faithfully, and with compassion.

Today’s readings: Day: Acts 12:1-11; 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18; Matthew 16:13-19 (591). “You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church.”

**SAT, JUN 30, 2018: MEMORIAL OF THE FIRST MARTYRS OF THE CHURCH IN ROME Don’t fan the flames**

In the summer of A.D. 64 a terrible fire swept through the city of Rome. Emperor Nero found himself both praised for his efforts to help the victims and also accused of setting the fire. To deflect the criticism, he blamed the city’s Christian community, whom many Romans disliked already because they felt Christians set themselves apart from the rest of society. But Nero’s move backfired, so to speak. The hideous executions he inflicted on Christians actually aroused the pity of many Romans. The victims continue to witness (martyr in Greek) both to the power of faith and to the dangers of prejudice and hate.

Today’s readings: Lamentations 2:2, 10-14, 18-19; Matthew 8:5-17 (376). “They faint away like the wounded in the streets of the city.”

**SUNDAY, JUL 1, 2018: THIRTEENTH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME** Don’t leave the door unlocked

Need is all around: a sick child here, a chronically ailing elder there. Meanwhile, multitudes languish with inadequate education, or possibly a simple lack of inspiration. We all wait more desperately than we imagine for healing to come, for a word to rouse our hearts. Hope seems unreasonable, until Jesus passes through—interpreting scenes from scripture and Francis’ life. As he guided the group to the exit he explained that on this wall was the most important scene yet: the door! The exit, he said, is a reminder to go through the doors and spread the Good News to the whole world. Something to think about next time you exit a church!

Today’s readings: 2 Kings 19:9b-11, 14-21, 31-35a, 36; Matthew 7:6, 12-14 (372). “Enter through the narrow gate.”

Today’s readings: Day: Acts 12:1-11; 2 Timothy 4:6-8, 17-18; Matthew 16:13-19 (591). “You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church.”

Today’s readings: 2 Kings 24:8-17; Matthew 7:21-29 (374). “The crowds were astonished at Jesus’ teaching, for he taught them as one having authority.”

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