ADORATION: Thursdays from 12:00 - 8:00 PM

HOLY DAYS: VIGIL MASS 7:00 PM ; 8:00 AM, 7:00 PM

RECONCILIATION: Saturdays from 3:00 to 4:00 PM

“Go and tell John what you hear and see: The blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them.”

MATTHEW 11:4–5

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 15, 2019

LITURGY SCHEDULE

SATURDAY: 8:00 AM and 4:30 PM
SUNDAY: 7:00 AM, 8:30 AM, 11:00 AM
1:00 PM (Spanish)
PARISH & SCHOOL STAFF

Fr. Anthony Huong Le, Parochial Administrator  
(925) 228 -2230
Deacon Albert Dizon  Ext. 7
Deacon David Holland  Ext. 7
Sylvia Lloren  Ext. 2  
Office Administrator/ Sacramental Coordinator
Troy Killorn  Ext. 3  
Director of Music Ministry / Maintenance Manager
Karen Glen  Ext. 4  
Bookkeeper / Safe Environment Coordinator
Andrea Watkins  Ext. 5  
Director Religious Education (K-8)  
Family Sunday Faith Formation Ministry
Paul & Jennifer Holland  Ext. 8  
Co-coordinators, Confirmation Ministry

CHURCH LOCATION: 606 Melius 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

OFFICE HOURS:  
Mon-Thur. 8:30 AM - 1 PM  
2:00 PM - 5 PM  
Friday: 8:30 AM - 1 PM
Jessica Griswold, Principal  griswold@csdo.org
ST. CATHERINE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
SCHOOL K-8: 604 Melius Street, Martinez, CA
TELEPHONE / FAX: 925-228-4140 / 925-228-0697
OFFICE HOURS: 9AM – 2 PM
SCHOOL WEBSITE: http://school.stcatherinemartinez.com

Mea Auld, Pre-School Director  
ST. CATHERINE PRE-SCHOOL  
mauld@csdo.org
PRE SCHOOL LOCATION: 1125 Ferry Street, Martinez, CA
TELEPHONE / FAX: 925-229-2255 / 925-229-2474  
scpreschool@comcast.net

Before serving or continuing in your ministry or organization, please complete the Diocesan required Safe Environment for Children Project Training @ www.virtusonline.org

SAFE ENVIRONMENT: www.virtusonline.org

RCIA: “Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults”  
Are you interested in becoming Catholic?  
Do you need Adult Baptism?  
Holy Eucharist (Communion)? Confirmation?
St. Catherine offers a friendly and supportive program. Please call the office for more information or Karen at ext. 4

SACRAMENTAL INFORMATION

BAPTISMS:  
Registration is mandatory two months prior to the Baptism month. Please call the office to make an appointment once you have your documents ready. Parents & Godparents are required to attend a mandatory Baptism preparation class one month before reception of the Sacrament. All information regarding requirements and schedules, can be found on the website at www.stcmtz.org

FIRST EUCHARIST:  
The Religious Education ministry begins in September and ends in May. The First Holy Communion program is a two year program. In the 2nd year, nine First Communion “Parent Only Classes” are conducted on Monday’s (Oct — May) See faith formation calendar posted on the website for dates. drestrcath@ymail.com or contact Andrea at Ext 5

CONFIRMATION:  
Youth Confirmation ministry begins on September 29th. It is a one year program for all incoming Freshmen or above. Please contact: Paul or Jenny Holland at Ext 8 or email them at stcathym@gmail.com for more Information.

MARRIAGES:  
Arrangements and mandatory preparation need to be arranged at least eight months prior to a wedding date. No dates can be set prior to an initial meeting with a priest. No exceptions. www.stcmtz.org

RECONCILIATION:  
Confession times are weekly on Saturdays from 3:00 - 4:00 PM and/or by appointment.

ANOINTING OF THE SICK:  
The sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick is the continuation of the Lord’s compassion for the sick. The sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick is one of two sacraments which heals and saves the baptized person from sin. The other sacrament of healing is Penance. For an anointing during working hours, please call the Parish office.

FUNERALS:  
We recommend using Catholic Funeral and Cemetery Services at 925-932-0900. A representative will contact the parish office to coordinate your arrangements.
Dear Families In Christ,

My experience with our Herculean team-effort serving hospitality reverberates with compassion and humility.

The coordination and initiatives of hospitality are inspired by our Priest and volunteers. As we follow Jesus with His bread of eternal life, we also focus on the needs of the church and ways to serve those needs. Vigilant with open arms to welcome people at the door to worship. Our handshakes mean more than pen and paper. We greet and handout our church's informative bulletins. We assist folks at the parking lot and give directions as needed. "Hospitality is specific hallmark for Clergy and church ministers." (1 Timothy 3:2) (Titus 1:7-8). Father meets everyone at the door to invigorate friendships. Volunteers serve refreshments with the best in quality flavor and hospitality. We help parishioners who are barely able to walk. We donate generously to the church, school and Diocese. Our Vicentians distribute food weekly. We never stop exploring. We continue to fish looking for adventure.

"Do not neglect hospitality to strangers" (Hebrew 13:2)."Show hospitality to one another without grumbling" (1 Peter 4:9). Visit and comfort the sick at the hospitals. "Beloved I pray that all may go well with you may be in good health, as it goes well with your soul." (3 John 1:2). We seek to improve diversity and inclusions. As stewards, we manage God's properties, financial resources, care for His sheep on God's behalf. We organize walking processions downtown to honor God. Entrusted to maintain our facilities and buildings. Provide training and understanding for our altar servers. We welcome Christians to receive the seven sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, Holy Eucharist, Penance, Holy Orders, Matrimony, and the Anointing of the sick throughout the year. We conduct, teach religious education, fellowships, provide retreats, bible study, safe environment coordination and adhere to volunteer requirements. We share good news and talented music together. We pray for all.

Our new world-class organ's musical tune elevates the solemnity of the liturgy. The Organist's musical expertise appeals to all worshipers. It emits comforting, marvelous melody and harmony sound textures from beginning to end. It produces pieties of religious pride because of the unique quality of sounds that palpitate our hearts with joy. It beautiful melody exceeds the spoken words in expressing feeling of the soul. It represents a vibrant instrument honoring, praising the Heavenly Father and represents an element of psalms, reverence and hospitality. During the liturgy, our organ, fascinates the entire congregations with electrifying tones alive with munificent love and adoration to the Almighty God.

This is my experience that gives peace and hospitality. God redeemed us. Without church and God, we would be nothing more than bacterium breathing on a pebble in space. Because of God, we can stand or kneel in prayers after receiving Him in the Holy Eucharist. This, hospitality is receiving God's free sanctifying grace: to love and to forgive. To give without asking for return. God's powerful force of love within us implanted by God and sustained by God. The beauty of ADVENT season is the essence of Hospitality that unites us. The thrill of hope is real and it comes to life in the loveliness of ADVENT season.

God created the Universe in all its intricate detail. With every stroke of God's brush, He demonstrated how much He loves beauty. Like Michelangelo's Sistine Chapel and our newly renovated Church by Father Anthony Le, are created by Pastoral love of hospitality wedded with creativity. The most beautiful of all is US in God's likeness. This season of ADVENT we celebrate the light of the world, born to shine forth into darkness. We prepare for Christmas through the lens of marvelous beauty. We mark the days with daily rosary novena and we seek the Lord's Hospitality in scripture reading with prophesies that led the path to Jesus' manger.

This hospitality is hitched to the ADVENT rite, when the parish team of dedicated saints among us, ministries, respecting, helping and praying for one another-- the joy of human experience meets the radiant light of ADVENT hospitality. "Let all that you do be done in love." (1-Corinthians 16:14). May God bless you all.

C.C. Salonga
St. Catherine of Siena Parish follows Jesus by welcoming all, sharing our gifts, and giving glory to God.

Christmas Schedule

SAT  DEC 14  Advent Communal Penance Service  10:00AM
SAT  DEC 14  Vigil Mass  4:30PM
SUN  DEC 15  Third Sunday of Advent  7:00AM, 8:30AM, 11:00AM, 1:00PM
SUN  DEC 15,16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23  Simbang Gabi / Las Posadas  7:00PM
WED  DEC 18  Advent Evening Prayer  8:00 PM
SAT  DEC 21  Vigil Mass 4:30PM
SUN  DEC 22  Fourth Sunday of Advent  7:00AM, 8:30AM, 11:00AM, 1:00PM

Christmas Eve ~ Nativity of the Lord
MON  DEC 24  4:00PM  Children/Youth
          8:00PM  Spanish Mass
          11:45PM  Prelude
          12:00AM  Midnight Mass
Christmas Day ~ Nativity of the Lord
TUE  DEC 25  7:00 AM, 8:30AM, 11:00AM
SAT  DEC 28  Vigil Mass 4:30PM
SUN  DEC 29  Feast of the Holy Family
          7:00AM, 8:30AM, 11:00AM, 1:00PM
TUE  DEC 31  New Year’s Eve Vigil Mass  7:00PM
WED  JAN  1  New Years Day Mass 11:00AM

Memorial Votive Candles are available to honor the deceased. They are located in the Sacred Heart of Jesus alcove in the church and can be reserved for one year, renewable thereafter. Forms are available at the alcove and parish website. For more information please call the parish office.

FACILITIES
To assure that our Church and facilities testify to the greater honor and glory of God.

WEEK-AT-A-GLANCE

Sunday,  12/15  THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
          8:00 AM   PH
          8:30 AM   CH/SC  NO Hospitality
          11:00 AM  CH/PC  Faith Formation Mass/Class
          7:00 PM   CH  Confirmation Mass /Class
          SLRC Simbang Gabi/Las Posadas

Monday,  12/16
          7:30 AM   CH  Pray the Rosary
          2:00 PM   CH  School Practice
          5:30 PM   CH  Pageant Rehearsal
          7:00 PM   CH  SLRC Simbang Gabi/Las Posadas

Tuesday,  12/17
          7:30 AM   CH  Pray the Rosary
          9:00 AM   CH  School Practice
          2:00 PM   CH  School Practice
          6:00 PM   CH  Choir Rehearsal
          7:00 PM   PH  YLI Meeting
          7:00 PM   CH  SLRC Simbang Gabi/Las Posadas
          7:00 PM   PC  Scripture Reflection with Clergy
          7:30 PM   CH  Spanish Choir Rehearsal

Wednesday, 12/18
          7:30 AM   CH  Pray the Rosary
          2:00 PM   CH  School Practice
          3:15 PM   CH  Children’s Choir
          6:30 PM   PC/L  Legion of Mary
          7:00 PM   PC/L  RCIA Class Rm #210
          7:00 PM   CH  SLRC Simbang Gabi/Las Posadas
          8:00 PM   CH  Advent Evening Prayer

Thursday,  12/19
          6:00 AM   CH  Mañanitas
          7:30 AM   CH  Pray the Rosary
          12:00 PM  CH  Adoration
          7:00 PM   PH  Knights of Columbus
          7:00 PM   CH  SLRC Simbang Gabi/Las Posadas

Friday,  12/20
          7:30 AM   CH  Pray the Rosary
          6:00 PM   PH  StVdP Set-up
          7:00 PM   CH  SLRC Simbang Gabi/Las Posadas

Saturday,  12/21
          7:30 AM   CH  Pray the Rosary
          8:00 PM   PH  StVdP Distribution
          7:00 PM   CH  SLRC Simbang Gabi/Las Posadas

Sunday,  12/22  FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT
          8:00 AM   PH  Hospitality—Thank you Webb Family!
          11:00 AM  CH/PH/PC  Confirmation Mass / Class
          2:30 PM   CH  Baptisms
          2:30 PM   PH  Posada
          7:00 PM   CH  SLRC Simbang Gabi/Las Posadas
The days leading up to Christmas provide a perfect opportunity to deepen the way you pray the Rosary. The Rosary, while one of the most popular devotions in the Catholic Church, is also one of the easiest to stop. We might make a commitment to pray the Rosary on a daily basis, but too often our prayer can become bland and repetitive, lacking any inspiration. After a few days we may put the Rosary down and never return to it. Advent presents a unique opportunity to revive our interest in the Rosary. It is the shortest liturgical season in the Catholic Church and it is entirely focused on Jesus and Mary. In many ways Advent could be called the “Season of Mary,” as we accompany her on her road to Bethlehem. Many spiritual writers encourage spending a minute reflecting on the particular mystery of the Rosary before reciting the next decade. The Joyful mysteries of the Rosary are the perfect mysteries to meditate on during Advent, as they focus entirely on Jesus’ childhood.

Here are a few sample reflections taken from the *Golden Manual* that might help you enter into the Rosary in a more prayerful way during Advent.

**The Annunciation**

Let us contemplate, in this mystery, how the angel Gabriel saluted our Blessed Lady with the title, “Full of grace,” and declared unto her the Incarnation of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

**The Visitation**

Let us contemplate, in this mystery, how the Blessed Virgin Mary, understanding from the angel that her cousin St. Elisabeth had conceived, went with haste into the mountains of Judea to visit her, bearing her Divine Son within her womb, and remained with her three months.

**The Birth of Our Savior Jesus in Bethlehem**

Let us contemplate, in this mystery, how the Blessed Virgin Mary, when the time of her delivery was come, brought forth our Redeemer, Jesus Christ, at midnight, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for him in the inns at Bethlehem.

**The Presentation of Our Blessed Lord in the Temple**

Let us contemplate, in this mystery, how the Blessed Virgin Mary, on the day of her purification, presented the child Jesus in the Temple, where holy Simeon, giving thanks to God, with great devotion received him into his arms.

**The Finding of the Child Jesus in the Temple**

Let us contemplate, in this mystery, how the Blessed Virgin Mary, after having lost (through no fault of hers) her beloved Son in Jerusalem, sought him for the space of three days; and at length found him in the Temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them, and asking them questions, being of the age of twelve years.
DISCIPLESHIP
To empower a community of Christian people walking together as disciples of Jesus in order to share His good news.

Join Him at St. Catherine’s Church, won’t you?
Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament
Thursdays from 12 noon to 8:00 pm

“The Church and the world have a great need for the Eucharist. Jesus awaits us in this Sacrament of love. Let us take the time to celebrate and contemplate the fullness of our faith.” – Saint Pope John Paul II

- Select an hour or two on any Thursday from noon to 8:00 PM
- Sign-up on the schedule in the vestibule of the church on the counter near the Msgr. Deans room Chapel on Thursday’s
- Preferably two at a time per hour for coverage and safety.
- A minimum of five parishioners for an hour each week will provide complete

Pope Francis 50th Anniversary of his Ordination to the Priesthood.
We thank him for his many years of faithful service to the Church and for his witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

#PrayforPopeFrancis

Father of mercy, we come before you with gratitude for the fifty years of priesthood of Pope Francis, whom you have made Peter’s successor. Support him with the Spirit’s gifts, so that he can continue to preach the Gospel with priestly zeal and lead the Church with wisdom and strength and courage. May his example of long and faithful service be an inspiration to your priests and to all your faithful. We ask this through Christ our Lord.
STEWARDSHIP
To create a culture in the parish rooted in gratitude and generosity.

December 8, 2019
WEEKLY CONTRIBUTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sunday Collection</td>
<td>$5,194.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religious Retirement</td>
<td>$2,038.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Immaculate Conception</td>
<td>1,011.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sr. Jeanne’s Winfest</td>
<td>$1,370.00</td>
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<tr>
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<td>$278.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth Ministry</td>
<td>$768.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you for your continued generosity.

Retirement Fund for Religious

Religious give thanks. “Thank you’ hardly seems adequate to convey what it means to us,” says a Catholic sister of the financial assistance her community received from the retirement Fund for Religious. Prayer-filled thanks for your donation to last week’s second collection.

2019 Bishop’s Appeal
SCS Goal Summary:

- Parish Goal: $23,000.00
- Funds Raised: $21,978.00
- % of Goal Raised: 95.56%
- Remaining: $1,022.00

Hospitality Calendar

DECEMBER
15 Pancake Breakfast-K of C
22 Webb Family & Friends
29 Guadalupe Society

2020 Hospitality Calendar

The Hospitality Team is preparing the calendar for 2020. If you haven’t had a turn at hosting Sunday Hospitality, please pray about it and consider signing up to host. Try to gather your friends, family members or ministry/club to join the fun. The more the merrier. It is a labor of love. Contribute what you can. Feel free to contact me by phone or text at 925-286-1207. I would be happy to talk about food ideas and what will be provided by the Parish. Thank you to all who have already participated in this generous giving of oneself to others. In Christ’s love, from your Hospitality Team Liaison, Debbie Pelizzari

CHRISTMAS GIFT GIVING TREE
ST. VINCENT DE PAUL
You’re invited to donate a child’s unwrapped toy and/or a gift of a sweatshirt or gift card for our adult neighbors. Select a YELLOW tag and tape it to the gift packages only. Please leave all presents unwrapped or placed in an opened ended gift bags. Presents will be collected up until Sunday, Dec. 15 and distributed to the neighbors on the weekend.

SKILLED NURSING HOMES
You’re invited to bring a unwrapped gift for our local rest home residents. Please clearly label your unwrapped gift WOMAN or MAN and place in the marked box under the tree no later than Sunday, Dec. 15. Possible gift ideas include hats, slippers, socks, scarves, etc. Please NO lotions, NO soaps, and NO perfumes. These items will be removed from the gifts.

MOUNTAIN VIEW SHELTER
You’re invited to select GREEN and/or RED tag bearing the names of current shelter residents. The age and gift ideas are indicated on each tag. You can return gifts up to Sunday, Dec 22nd. The gifts will then be distributed to the Shelter families after Masses.

Please contact Anne Crisp with any questions or details at (925) 356-8822

THE LOOK OF LOVE
What does love look like?
It has feet to go to the poor and needy.
It has eyes to see misery and want.
It has ears to hear
the sighs and sorrows of others.
—St. Augustine

St. Catherine Parish offers deepest sympathy
and prayers for the family; and, the repose of the soul of
Robert Peter Gardella
Margarita Flores
who entered eternal life.
St. Catherine of Siena School
Mission Statement

Saint Catherine of Siena School answers the call to nurture each child—spirit, mind and body—in a safe, caring environment by providing Christ-centered, challenging curriculum preparing each child for a future as people of faith, service, respect, and responsibility.

REASON TO REJOICE

Dark violet is used throughout Advent to express its character as a season of spiritual preparation for Christmas and “the coming of the Lord.” But on the Third Sunday of Advent, formerly known as Gaudete (Latin for “rejoice”) Sunday, rose may be added to the liturgical environment. The entire liturgy is infused with a spirit of rejoicing.

Today’s first reading and Gospel proclaim the reality of God’s saving work in our midst. Isaiah exuberantly describes the idyllic transformation of all creation as a result of God’s presence in the midst of the people. In the Gospel, Jesus connects Isaiah’s prophecy with what is happening in his own ministry. In addition to the list of healings from Isaiah (the blind, the lame, lepers, and the deaf), Jesus’ presence brings two other reasons for rejoicing: “The dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them” (Matthew 11:5).

WAITING AND HOPING

The people had been searching and waiting for generations for the Anointed One of God. They knew in their hearts that they needed someone to bring them back, to close the divide that had grown between God and God’s people. John’s baptism of repentance prepared them for the advent, or coming, of the Christ. John’s message of repentance and the demands of faith, of justice, and care for the poor and oppressed, while comforting to the weak and vulnerable, was challenging to those in positions of power. Like prophets before him, he refused to ignore the promptings of God to speak God’s word. And like many prophets who preceded him, John was imprisoned and eventually martyred.

We can relate to the people who went out into the desert to be baptized. They heard John’s urgent call to repentance and his declaration that the Messiah was coming soon. They heard him express God’s care for those who needed it most. They were compelled to hear and respond. Their lives were changed, as their hearts were opened to the reality of God’s love to which John so powerfully gave witness.

We too ache for God’s healing and peace. We wait for God to break into our lives with love. Who among us has not at times felt weak, feeble, afraid? Take heart, you are not alone. God is with you. God is ready to save us from the darkness of sin and lead us to joy in the presence of God’s mercy. This is the message of Advent, and of the whole of the gospel: God desires so deeply to be with us that God came to be one with us in Jesus Christ.

Today’s Readings: Is 35:1–6a, 10; Ps 146:6–7, 8–9, 9–10; Jas 5:7–10; Mt 11:2–11
Sunday, Dec 15, 2019
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

What are we waiting for?

Some people make the incredible claim that, 2,000 years ago, God’s spoken Word became flesh and blood. This incarnate Word lived and served and saved—not by rising to tremendous power, but by dying and rising to new life. A lot rides on John the Baptist’s question to Jesus: Are you the one? If not you, then who? If Jesus is the one, trusting in him means embracing a startling trajectory of service and surrender in a world of upward striving. It will turn our own lives inside out. What does it cost you to say: “Jesus is Lord”? TODAY’S READINGS: Isaiah 35:1-6a, 10; James 5:7-10; Matthew 11:2-11 (7). “Are you the one who is to come, or should we look for another?”

Monday, Dec 16, 2019
ADVENT WEEKDAY

Invest in the teachings

Magisterium is a mighty big word that means a lot to Catholics. The word derives from the Latin for “teacher.” It refers to the sacred deposit of faith, which includes both scripture and tradition, that’s been entrusted to the church. And it is the source of the church’s authority to interpret this deposit of faith, which has been divinely revealed by Christ, the “Word made flesh.” What an immense gift from God, for all of us to be shown so much. Be faithful to it. TODAY’S READINGS: Numbers 24:2-7, 15-17a; Matthew 21:23-27 (187). “By what authority are you doing these things? And who gave you this authority?”

Tuesday, Dec 17, 2019
ADVENT WEEKDAY

Soon and very soon

Finally, like a long exhalation during the final week before Christmas, we pray the “O Antiphons,” which give us different ways to image the long-awaited Messiah. Some of the more colorful names are: Wisdom, Root of Jesse’s stem, Key of David, Radiant Dawn. Praying with one each day unites us to the universal church over many centuries. Check out YouTube for a video that provides historical background on the O Antiphons. Take a moment to watch it as part of your Advent observation. TODAY’S READINGS: Genesis 49:2, 8-10; Matthew 1:1-17 (193). “Of her was born Jesus, . . . called the Christ.”

Wednesday, Dec 18, 2019
ADVENT WEEKDAY

Prelude to Nativity

Today is International Migrants Day, reminding us that all biblical people, including the Holy Family, were obliged to roam to survive. The mystery of the Incarnation, Christ in us, is extended to all people, especially those who have been driven from their homelands by violence and crushing poverty, and who stand at our border seeking help. Should we wall them out or extend a hand in friendship and solidarity? All of us need rescuing! “O Leader of the House of Israel, giver of the Law to Moses on Sinai: Come to rescue us with your mighty power!” TODAY’S READINGS: Jeremiah 23:5-8; Matthew 1:18-25 (194).

Thursday, Dec 19, 2019
ADVENT WEEKDAY

Lord, come and save us

"O Root of Jesse’s stem, sign of God’s love for all his people: Come to save us without delay!" Today is the third day of the church’s week of O Antiphons, used at evening prayer to count down the final days of Advent. Each gives a different depiction of the Messiah; each captures the longing of a people yearning to be saved. Today’s imagery comes from Isaiah 11:1, where God establishes the House of David from beleaguered beginnings: “There shall come forth a shoot from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots.” David, the youngest son of Jesse, is as improbable a king as the Christ Child will be. If you haven’t been praying the O Antiphons this week, it’s not too late to start; nor is it too late to decorate a Jesse Tree, based on the same Isaiah verse. TODAY’S READINGS: Judges 13:2-7, 24-25a; Luke 1:5-25 (195). “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, because your prayer has been heard.”

Friday, Dec 20, 2019
ADVENT WEEKDAY

Make room at the inn

There’s a special Christmas season novena—that is, nine days of prayer—that commemorates the nine months of Mary’s pregnancy with Jesus, as well as her journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem, and it is done in the nine days leading up to his birthday. Called Las Posadas, which means “lodging,” it is celebrated by many Spanish-speaking cultures with reenactments of Joseph and Mary (often with entourage and even a donkey!) knocking on neighbors’ doors seeking a “place to stay.” A party usually ensues. Remember all those in the world who are journeying to find shelter for their children, and work to make our communities more open to them. In fact, celebrate their presence! TODAY’S READINGS: Isaiah 7:10-14; Luke 1:26-38 (196). “O Key of David, opening the gates of God’s eternal kingdom: Come and free the prisoners of darkness!”

Saturday, Dec 21, 2019
MEMORIAL OF PETER CANISIUS, PRIEST, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

Common ground is high ground

Peter Canisius (1521-97), a Dutch Jesuit priest who was a contemporary of Saint Ignatius, was a learned and capable scholar who started many Jesuit colleges. Peter had a gift for making theological doctrine understandable. To that end, he wrote three catechisms that helped common folk and children understand the teachings of the church and ground their faith. Peter’s ability to listen in working with non-Catholics helped him respect differences and seek common ground. We ask Saint Peter Canisius to help us listen to those with whom we disagree and seek common ground. TODAY’S READINGS: Song of Songs 2:8-14 or Zephaniah 3:14-18a; Luke 1:39-45 (197). “O Radiant Dawn, splendor of eternal light, sun of justice: Come and shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death.”
UPCOMING EVENTS

The Hispanic/Latino Community and the San Lorenzo Ruiz Community of the Parish and School send with joy an invitation to everyone in the joint celebration of Las Posadas and Simbang Gabi.

Las Posadas. This tradition was brought to Mexico from Spain by Catholic missionaries in the 1500s. It commemorates the journey that Mary and Joseph made to Bethlehem in search of a safe place where Mary could give birth to the baby Jesus. Posada means inn or dwelling in Spanish. Traditional Las Posadas celebration has several components: prayer (rosary), caminata (walking/ procession), food, and the 7-point piñata (which represents the seven deadly sins). The piñata is broken to symbolize destroying the sins. Las Posadas celebrations start 9 days before Christmas.

Simbang Gabi is a devotional nine-day series of dawn masses on the days leading up to Christmas. It starts on December 15 through December 23. This tradition was introduced in the Philippines by the Spanish friars in the 1600s. It allows farmers to celebrate Mass before going to work. Masses can start as early as 4:00 o’clock in the morning. Simbang Gabi is also known by its Spanish name Misa de Gallo or "Rooster’s Mass." Over the years, Filipino communities have made adjustments to when it is celebrated. Some parishes now celebrate Simbang Gabi around 6:00 or 7:00 o’clock in the evening, to accommodate different schedules of community members.

Las Posadas and Simbang Gabi are not just traditions but are spiritual preparations for Christmas, the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Come one, come all!
As one family at St. Catherine’s Parish and School, let us all join in this 9-day celebration.

December 15th through December 23rd at 7PM in the church

The 16th Annual Walk for Life West Coast is Saturday January 25, 2020. We have a 55-seat chartered bus ready to take us to this Respect Life event in San Francisco. As usual, we will attend Mass at the Cathedral of Saint Mary of the Assumption and then walk down to Civic Center for the program. The sign-up sheet will be available starting Saturday November 30th at Holiday Lane in the parish hall after the 4:30PM Mass and then again on Sunday December 1st in the parish hall. The sign-up sheet will be available for the entire month of December, but why wait? You can reserve your seat now by calling or texting Debbie Pelizzari at 925-286-1207. We’d like to order specially designed St. Catherine of Siena hats or tee shirts to commemorate the Walk. We need your head count so don’t delay your reservation.

This is a wonderful experience to show the world that we believe all life is precious and a beautiful gift from God. If you have any questions about the trip intinerary and the cost, please contact Debbie Pelizzari who will be your bus captain.

Are you Downsizing?
Are you Cleaning Your Closets in Prep for the Holidays?
St. Vincent de Paul Would be Grateful for Your Items!

Repurpose, Reuse and Recycle with St. Vincent de Paul of Contra Costa County!
The St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Stores in Pleasant Hill, Pittsburg and Brentwood support all our safety-net programs including the Free Dining Room, Free Food Pantries, Free Medical Clinic, Free Dental Program, Daytime Homeless Shelter, Auto Assistance Program and MORE!

Drop your Donations to:
Pittsburg Thrift Store
2210 Gladstone Dr.
Pittsburg, CA 94565
Mon. – Sat: 9 AM – 5 PM

Pleasant Hill Thrift Store
2815 Contra Costa Blvd.
Pleasant Hill, CA 94523
7 days a week: 9 AM – 5 PM

Brentwood Help & Hope Thrift Center
8890 Brentwood Blvd.
Brentwood, CA 94513
7 days a week: 10 AM – 6 PM

Furniture will be Picked up!
Call (925) 439-5060
for arrangements.

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MOUNTAIN VIEW SHELTER DINNERTIME

Mountain View Family Shelter in Martinez is a homeless family shelter that provides temporary housing for about 30 children and adults. It is a Shelter Inc. facility that provides shelter and case management services for homeless families in Contra Costa County. During the week of Jan. 27-31 we will cook the evening meals at the shelter and provide ongoing supplies for operations. Call Vivian Rittenhouse at (925) 229-0134

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SAINT JOHN OF THE CROSS (c. 1542-1591)

December 14

How beautiful the experience of love for God and neighbor, a fire deep within! How disheartening when love suddenly cools and our souls grow dark, our prayer arid. How painful when misunderstanding, even rejection, comes our way, sometimes from those we least expect. For all such “seasons of the soul,” an inspiring fellow-pilgrim is the poet and mystic John of the Cross. As a young Carmelite, he was recruited by Teresa of Ávila for her Discalced (“barefoot,” evangelical poverty) Carmelite reform, striving to renew the Church from within after the Protestant Reformation had led countless religious away. John suffered unspeakably harsh abuse, even imprisonment, from friars who rejected this reform. Yet during these times of deepest suffering, John composed spiritual masterpieces that still guide souls to God, their titles reflecting his own painful yet ultimately victorious journey: from The Dark Night of the Soul through The Ascent of Mount Carmel to his Spiritual Canticle and The Living Flame of Love. John summarized his spirituality simply: “Put love where there is no love, and you will find love.”

—Peter Scagnelli, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

Our Parish has a Facebook Page!
https://www.facebook.com
OfficialStCatherineofSienaChurch

OFFICE HOURS:
Mon-Thur. 8:30 AM - 1 PM
2:00 PM - 5 PM
Friday: 8:30 AM - 1 PM

BULLETIN SUBMISSIONS DEADLINES:
Due to early deadlines by the publisher, the following deadlines are in effect:
All requests must be submitted no later than:
December 16th for the December 29th
December 22nd for January 5th
Please direct your submissions to: stcathmtz@yahoo.com

MINISTRIES/ORGANIZATIONS CONTACTS

Before serving or continuing in your ministry, complete the Diocesan required Safe Environment for Children Project Training @ www.virtusonline.org. Thank you.

Altar Servers
Jack Watkins……………………………….925-957-0437
Beneath His Cross Apostolate
Jessica Preciado ...............................925-354-1656
Bingo
Don Brocca .................................925-858-7330
Catholic Youth Organization - CYO
Gina Marks .................................925-817-9429
Communications
Sylvia Lloren .................................925-228-2230
Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion
Mary Cook .................................925-229-2665
Faith Formation - Religious Education (PreK-8th Grades)
Andrea Watkins .............................925-228-2230
Finance Council
Don Brocca .................................925-229-4158
Grief /Card Ministry
Mary Cook .................................925-229-2665
Guadalupe Society
Guadalupe Cruz .............................925-337-2432
Hispanic Choir
Carolina Bruno .............................925-437-4074
Hospital/Sick/Homebound
Dave Holland .............................925-413-9240
Hospitality
Debbie Pelizzari .............................925-370-3874
Ignite
Cindy Buscaglia ..............................925-787-8396
Italian Catholic Federation - ICF
Tom Cook .................................925-229-2665
Knights of Columbus - K of C
Rik Silva .................................925-334-2429
La Comunidad Latina
Lucia Cruz .................................925-348-2620
Lectors
Carlos Melendez ...........................510-385-0506
Legion of Mary
Bobby Kiefer ...............................925-658-1442
Maintenance
Troy Killorn .................................925-229-2665
Music Ministry—Choir
Troy Killorn .................................925-228-2230
Pastoral Advisory Council
Karen Glen .................................925-788-7716 & Karen Sandri....925-370-7997
Respect Life
Linda Easterday .............................925-372-3845
Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults - RCIA
Karen Glen .................................925-228-2230
Safe Environment for Children Project - SECP
Karen Glen .................................925-228-2230
San Lorenzo Ruiz Community - SLRC
Esther Concepcion ...........................925-381-1835
Social Awareness
Anne Crisp .................................925-356-8822
Stewardship
Karen Glen .................................925-788-7716
St. Vincent de Paul Society - SVdP
Karen Glen .................................925-788-7716
Ushers
Rob Sacedo .................................925-250-4007
Young Ladies Institute - YLI
Rori Polvorosa ..............................510-734-4907
Confirmation /Youth Ministry (High School 9 -12 grades)
Paul & Jenny Holland ......................925-228-2230