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The Catholic Voice is mailed to households registered in parishes of the Diocese of Oakland.
To receive The Catholic Voice, contact your parish office and ask to be added to The Catholic Voice mailing list.

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The Diocese of Oakland is a member of the Catholic Media Association

The Catholic Voice (ISSN 0279-0645) is published monthly by the Diocese of Oakland, 2121 Harrison St., Oakland, CA 94612. Periodicals postage paid at Oakland, CA and at additional mailing offices: POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: The Catholic Voice, 2121 Harrison St., Oakland, CA 94612. © 2021 The Catholic Voice, Diocese of Oakland.
I think it’s good if we stop and reflect on what kind of world Christ is reborn in again this Christmas.

When I was young, the whole United States celebrated Christmas. The streets were decorated. As kids, we rode the amusement park rides set up on the roof of The Emporium department store in San Francisco. In every store we visited we greeted the staff and each other with “Merry Christmas.” Christmas Masses were absolutely packed. Now it’s more generic “Happy Holidays,” and the memory of the reason we celebrate Christmas as the birth of Jesus Christ is being lost.

What’s worse, I get letters from parents lamenting that their children do not go to church, or do not even believe in God. What’s going on?

We used to live in the Age of Christendom. Society as a whole in the USA and Europe supported our Judeo-Christian values, supported families, and supported marriage. The vast majority of Americans believed in God and went to church or synagogue weekly.

As kids, when we were home sick from school, we used to watch the TV game show “Password.” Every Friday afternoon before signing off, the host Allen Ludden would say, “Don’t forget, this weekend, worship at the church or synagogue of your choice … but worship!” Have you ever heard a TV host say something like this with the week-end approaching? That was during the “Age of Christendom”— which lasted from the baptism of Constantine as the first Christian Emperor in 337... up until recently.

Now we live in a “post-Christian” era. Society as a whole is either not interested in Judeo-Christian values — or is downright hostile to believers.

This is nothing new for the Church. When Christ was born, grew up and started his ministry, there were only 11 Apostles, a few hundred believers, no money, no church buildings, no Catholic schools or universities, no religious orders, no seminaries. Nothing ... but Faith! The Holy Spirit was alive, active and working. And the Church grew and prospered. The Faith spread mainly by word-of-mouth, by Christians testifying to others about the love Jesus had for them, and the power and effectiveness of his message: the Gospel of love and mercy. And the first Christians were willing to die for this Faith, rather than renounce it in the face of vicious persecution.

They say history is circular. I showed up at a party a few years ago wearing some old clothes I found in my bottom drawer. A friend said to me in front of the guests, “Just keep wearing those trousers, Michael, and they’ll eventually come back into style.” So it is with our Church and our Diocese at this time in history. First there was the Apostolic Age from Christ until 337. Then the Age of Christendom from 337 until 1965 (the year that church attendance was at its peak, and seminaries and convents were full to overflowing).

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4
Christmas Masses at the Cathedral of Christ the Light

Christmas Eve — Friday, Dec. 24
• 5 p.m. Mass in Vietnamese celebrated by Father Bich Nguyen
• 8 p.m. Solemn Mass of Christmas Night celebrated by Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ

Christmas Day — Saturday, Dec. 25
• 8 a.m. Mass in Vietnamese celebrated by Father Bich Nguyen
• 11 a.m. Solemn Mass of Christmas Day celebrated by Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ
• 1:30 p.m. Solemn Mass of Christmas Day (bilingual) celebrated by Father Brandon Macadaeg

Feast of the Holy Family — Sunday, Dec. 26
• 8 a.m. Mass in Vietnamese celebrated by Father Bich Nguyen
• 11 a.m. Solemn Mass celebrated by Father Dennis McManus
• No 1:30 p.m. Mass this day only

New Year’s Day — Saturday, Jan. 1
• 7:30 a.m. Mass in Vietnamese
• 11 a.m. Solemn Mass of Mary, Mother of God (Octave Day of Christmas) celebrated by Father Brandon Macadaeg
• No 5 p.m. Mass this day only

Feast of the Epiphany (Patronal Feast of the Cathedral) — Sun, Jan. 2
• 8 a.m. Mass in Vietnamese
• 11 a.m. Solemn Mass celebrated by Father Brandon Macadaeg
• 1:30 p.m. Mass in Spanish

And now we have returned to the Apostolic Age.

This is a tremendous opportunity. Casual Catholicism, cultural Catholicism or “Catholic-lite” just won’t survive anymore. What will survive are Catholics who have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ through a divine intimacy of prayer and worship, experience friendship in the church community, live out their relationship through service — and then share their friendship with Christ with those who do not know him.

One movement that has been doing this for years is Cursillo. It is still an excellent example of a weekend retreat experience that helps people have a personal encounter with Jesus.

Another that is growing is FOCUS, the Fellowship of Catholic University Students. We have FOCUS missionaries working in our diocese at the Newman Hall-Holy Spirit Parish at Cal Berkeley. There they don’t wait for people to come to church. These recent college grads go to the dorms, cafeterias, frat houses and gyms to meet students where they are. They befriend them. They share their experience of Jesus with them. And accompany their peers through a growing process of exposure to the Gospel message. It’s working. In the last 20 years since FOCUS was founded, countless young people have become disciples of Christ and members of the Church. And over 957 young people have entered seminaries and religious communities though involvement with FOCUS. I know of no other modern school of new evangelization that has had such success. These FOCUS missionaries are now being prepared to work in parishes as well as colleges campuses.

One other thing. The people who guide FOCUS have studied the results of their work and found that those young people who were born and raised Catholic and remained practicing Catholics into their adult life were those who had regular spiritual conversations with their parents. Parents’ sharing of their own personal experience of Faith in Jesus goes a long way to handing on that faith effectively to their children. Just dropping off the kids for CCD or Mass and going home without attending Mass as a family just doesn’t work.

Our Faith today needs witnesses. Faith needs to be shared — through authentic friendship — and practicing what we preach.

Please consider this aspect when you worship at the manger of Christ and receive Him in Holy Communion at Christmas. And share that joy — and His name — with others. A blessed Advent and Christmas to all of you. †
Deacon Dave’s Christmas Display

I
t was dark and gloomy last Christmas season at Casa del Pomba in Livermore, home of Deacon Dave Rezendes’ magnificent Christmas display. For public safety, Deacon Dave canceled his annual display in 2020.

But the lights — about 700,000 of them — will be shining brightly after the opening ceremonies Dec. 3 when the 38th celebration begins. The ceremonies will begin at 6:30 p.m. with the annual Christmas Procession down Hillcrest Avenue in Livermore.

Visitors will be welcomed from 6 to 9 p.m. Sunday-Thursday and 6 to 10 p.m. on Friday and Saturday. The display will close at 9 p.m. Jan. 1, 2022.

Updated information for visitors will be posted at www.casadelpomba.com.

Deacon Dave and his helpers have been constructing this year’s theme — a surprise until the words “Let there be light” are spoken.

In addition to being a “must see” on Christmas lights lists in the Bay Area and beyond, in many ways, it’s Deacon Dave’s ministry of lights.

“There are people who come, and they’re moved by the Spirit,” Deacon Dave said. “They start asking questions. ‘Deacon, I’ve been away from the Church.’”

He carries 3 x 5 cards so they can leave their name and number and he can get back to them. “I’ll contact you and we’ll talk about getting you to come home,” he tells them. If they’re from a different religious tradition, he offers to put them in touch with his colleagues of other faiths.

The first year of the Christmas display coincided with Deacon Dave’s ordination to the diaconate. If you visit, wish him a happy 39th anniversary.

He approaches the 2021 Christmas season with the same enthusiasm and joy that accompanied his first.

“People come from all over to see the display, and if it helps them see the meaning of Christmas,” he said. “It’s all worth it. There’s always a Nativity scene in the window, bookmarks with the year’s prayer and a big board on which the prayer has been painted. Not to mention the spirit that someone did this just for you.”

“There are people who come, and they’re moved by the Spirit. They start asking questions. ‘Deacon, I’ve been away from the Church.’”

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The event will offer togetherness and comfort to those who due to the loss of a loved one, or another personal tragedy, might not be enjoying the festivities of the Christmas season.

The service recognizes that not everyone feels joyful at Christmas and honors the need to reach out and seek peace and comfort in our souls. Quiet, moving musical interludes, prayers, Scripture readings and quiet song. The service ends with a candle-lighting ceremony.

Blue Christmas was introduced to the Cathedral of Christ the Light by John Renke, who directs the Office of Worship.

**DECEMBER 21 IS THE SHORTEST DAY AND LONGEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR.**
**AT 5:30 P.M., A SERVICE OF REFLECTION WILL BE CONDUCTED IN THE CATHEDRAL OF CHRIST THE LIGHT IN OAKLAND.**

John learned of the Blue Christmas movement more than a dozen years ago, and created a one-hour prayer service, with Scripture, song and silence, while serving as organist and director of music for the Episcopal Diocese of Hawaii.

“It’s very reflective,” John said. “We talk about all the losses that accumulate throughout our lives,” he said, “the loss of a relationship, or a job or the loss of health.” The service acknowledges, he said, “the things that weigh on people.”

The service ends with light, as participants are invited to come forward and light candles.

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“WE TALK ABOUT ALL THE LOSSES THAT ACCUMULATE THROUGHOUT OUR LIVES. THE LOSS OF A RELATIONSHIP, OR A JOB OR THE LOSS OF HEALTH. THE THINGS THAT WEIGH ON PEOPLE.”

—JOHN RENKE, OFFICE OF WORSHIP

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Join us for our Annual Remembrance Tree Lighting and Ornament Making

SATURDAY, DEC. 4
- HOLY SEPULCHRE CEMETERY, HAYWARD
- HOLY CROSS CEMETERY, ANTIOCH
- QUEEN OF HEAVEN CEMETERY, LAFAYETTE
- ST. JOSEPH CEMETERY, SAN PABLO

Ornament-making beginning at 10 a.m. You may bring an ornament from home, but it cannot be returned to you.

The Remembrance Tree will be blessed during the 11 a.m. Memorial Mass

*Please check the website www.cfcsoakland.org for updated details.*
Pilgrimage in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe

WHEN: DEC. 4
STARTING POINT: ST. LOUIS BERTRAND CHURCH, 1410 100TH AVE., OAKLAND 94603
ARRIVAL: 8 A.M.
START WALKING: 8:40 A.M.
FIRST MASS: ST. ELIZABETH CHURCH, 1500 34TH AVE., OAKLAND 94601
MASS START TIME: 11 A.M.
SECOND MASS: THE CATHEDRAL OF CHRIST THE LIGHT, 2121 HARRISON ST., OAKLAND 94612
MASS START TIME: 1 P.M.

Last year, because of COVID-19 restrictions, the 2020 celebration was more subdued, with the Mass live streamed with no public participation after drive-by blessings in front of the Cathedral of Christ the Light.

This year, floats, musicians and pilgrims will be out in great numbers. The pilgrimage draws 6,000 pilgrims, far more than the cathedral can hold, Héctor Medina, coordinator of Latino Ministry, said. There is usually seating in the Cathedral Event Center, but it is under construction this year and unavailable.

Instead, Héctor said, at the suggestion of Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ, there will be two Masses offered that day. The bishop of Oakland will celebrate both Masses.

The pilgrimage will begin at St. Louis Bertrand Church, with pilgrims gathering at 8 a.m. ready to begin their journey at 8:40 a.m. Pilgrims will be welcome to attend the first Mass, estimated to begin at 11 a.m., at St. Elizabeth Church in the Fruitvale District.

Some pilgrims will continue on to the Cathedral of Christ the Light, where Mass will start at 1 p.m. Dec. 12 is the feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the patroness of the Americas. The appearance of Mary that became the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe began Dec. 9, 1531, when a peasant, St. Juan Diego, had a vision of a young woman on a hill outside Mexico City. The woman asked him to build a church at that location.

He reported this to the bishop, who asked for proof. Juan Diego returned, saw the woman again, who had him gather roses into his cloak and go back to the bishop. It was winter, so roses would have been nonexistent.

When Juan Diego opened his cloak, not only the roses but also the image of the woman was on it, the classic icon of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

SEASON OF Light

Come pray, reflect and remember

Join us from 5 to 7 p.m. every Tuesday in December and January in the candle-lit chapels of

• Holy Sepulchre Cemetery, Hayward
• Holy Cross Cemetery, Antioch
• Queen of Heaven Cemetery, Lafayette
• St. Joseph Cemetery, San Pablo

A time to get away — for 10 minutes, for an hour — from the busy-ness of the season and remember your loved ones.

www.cfcsoakland.org

Pilgrimage in honor of
Our Lady of Guadalupe

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SECOND MASS: THE CATHEDRAL OF CHRIST THE LIGHT, 2121 HARRISON ST., OAKLAND 94612
MASS START TIME: 1 P.M.
Simbang Gabi 2021 kicks off Dec. 14 at cathedral

The Filipino clergy of the Diocese of Oakland are excited to once again welcome everybody back — yes, in-person! — to the Cathedral of Christ the Light at 7 p.m. Dec. 14 for this year’s Kick-Off Mass of the Simbang Gabi with Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ.

While there will be no elaborate fiesta celebration after the Mass this year, because of the restrictions still in place in terms of serving food indoors, organizers of the event are planning to distribute catered “to go” boxes while the Filipino priests and deacons serenade the people gathered at the plaza.

Re-experience the warmth of Christmas and the joy of growing in faith as we celebrate this time-honored tradition — the Filipino way! Come in your Filipiniana attire, with your parish banner and lantern for the procession, and enjoy the festive music from the choir assembled by Ariel Mayormita.

AT THE PARISH LEVEL, PREPARATIONS ARE IN FULL SWING FOR THE NOVENA MASSES:

- All Saints, Hayward: 6 a.m. Dec. 16-24; 510.914.4076
- Holy Spirit, Fremont: 6:30 p.m. Dec. 15-23; patricia.saturnio@gmail.com
- Immaculate Heart of Mary, Brentwood: 6 a.m. Dec. 16-24; 925.890.4317
- Most Holy Rosary, Antioch: 7 p.m. Dec. 15-23; 925.586.3165
- St. Anne, Union City: 5:30 a.m. Dec. 16-24; 510.471.7766
- St. Anthony, Oakley: 6:30 p.m. Dec. 15-23; 925.813.4311
- St. Albert the Great, Alameda: 5 a.m. Dec. 16-24; ordinarioh@yahoo.com
- St. Catherine of Siena, Martinez: 6 a.m. Dec. 16-24; e.centeno@sbcglobal.net
- St. Francis of Assisi, Concord: 5:30 a.m. Dec. 16-24; bengbeza@sbcglobal.net
- St. Joachim, Hayward: 5:30 a.m. Dec. 16-24; stjoachimmusic@gmail.com
- St. Joan of Arc, San Ramon: 7 p.m. Dec. 16-23, 7 a.m. Dec. 24; anbantug@yahoo.com
- St. John Vianney, Walnut Creek: 6:30 a.m. Dec. 22; 925.876.8660
- St. Joseph Basilica, Alameda: 6 p.m. Dec. 15-17, Dec. 20-23; 6 a.m. Dec. 18-19; aramos94501@gmail.com
- St. Joseph, Pinole: 7 p.m. Dec. 15-23; 510.517.9055
- St. Michael, Livermore: 5:30 a.m. Dec. 16-24; anthony.contarciego@gmail.com
- St. Patrick, Rodeo: 5 a.m. Dec. 16-24; 510.799.4406
- St. Raymond, Dublin: 5:30 a.m. Dec. 16-23; getininvolved@srcdublin.org

Look for updated listings of Simbang Gabi Masses online at www.catholicvoiceoakland.org.
Embracing the Future

The Very Rev. Brandon Macadaeg has one appeal to parishioners of the Diocese of Oakland: hear once the story of what Jesus Christ has done for us; that is the extraordinary news of the Gospel. It is strong inspiration for the task ahead — the Mission Alignment Process.

Local Roots

Father Brandon Macadaeg grew up in different parts of the diocese, attending Our Lady of the Rosary in Union City and All Saints School in Hayward. He graduated from The Catholic University of America, receiving a combined bachelor’s and master’s degree in philosophy. During those years, he entered the seminary and, at the request of then-Bishop Salvatore Cordileone, went on to study theology at the North American College in Rome.

Father Brandon was ordained for service in the Diocese of Oakland in 2013. After ordination, he became the parochial vicar at Holy Spirit Parish in Fremont. In 2017, he was assigned by Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ to the parishes of St. Lawrence O’Toole and St. Paschal Baylon, where he worked to merge the two parishes into one: Divine Mercy Parish. When the Very Rev. Jay Matthews passed away in 2019, Bishop Barber assigned Father Brandon to serve as the pastor and rector of the Cathedral of Christ the Light.

Making Disciples

In a recent conversation about the Mission Alignment Process, Father shared “that the most important goal of the Church is simple: To Make Disciples. Jesus, in fact, even commanded that of his disciples when he ascended into heaven. (Matthew 28:19) Jesus has lovingly raised authentic, joy-filled missionary disciples in the Diocese of Oakland, and we want them to flourish, to be on fire with the love of Jesus and boldly share the good news that Jesus is the answer to the desires of every human heart.”

We know there are issues and problems we are facing but we can’t let those issues distract us from furthering the mission of Christ. We must align everything we have: parishes, leaders, treasures.
Likewise, the goal of the commission leading the process is to make sure all the resources of the diocese are effectively channeled for the formation of missionary disciples and the sharing of good news. Engage those on fire and set them up for success in seeking the lost and sharing the Gospel. This, Father Brandon reminds us, is the spiritual heart of the process. The goal of the commission is about people and what God is doing in the lives of His people.

This summons is clearly in line with the vision of our Holy Father, Pope Francis, who said, “We need to move ‘from a pastoral ministry of ‘mere conservation’ to a decidedly missionary pastoral ministry.’” (Evangelii Gaudium, 15)

“We know there are issues and problems we are facing but we can’t let those issues distract us from furthering the mission of Christ,” Father Brandon said. “We must align everything we have: parishes, leaders, treasures.

“We are led by the Holy Spirit and are convinced that God is calling us to align the resources of this diocese to people who are courageously living their faith,” he said. “We recognize that we have resources that need to be orient-ed to helping people flourish as disciples. We want these disciples to be successful in growing deeper in their faith and live out their faith wherever God wants them.”

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I dream of a ‘missionary option,’ that is, a missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church’s customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures can be suitably channeled for the evangelization of today’s world rather than for her [the Church’s] self-preservation”

(Evangelii Gaudium)
How to Best Serve the People

Father Brandon stresses that parishes must be able to serve the people. As a diocese, we are called to move to a more decisively apostolic mindset of being Church: the framework which characterized the early Church, where Christians were overwhelmed by Jesus’ love for them and bold in their conviction to share the message of Christ to everyone without counting the costs. For many decades, we have lost our apostolic courage and have been operating in a Christendom model of church life, where the Church had been operating within wider society that was more or less aligned to Christian truths.

Sadly, our comfort in a Christendom era made the Church lukewarm in evangelizing, resulting in the posture of working to maintain structures, institutions or ways of doing things, that therefore make the Church unable to cope with the current culture around us.

To move forward, he says, we need a more bold and apostolic approach to being Church today. “I agree with Pope Francis that the Church’s way of doing things should be channeled not for preservation but for transmitting the good news. I am confident and prayerful that the Mission Alignment Process will set us on the right trajectory for where the Lord is leading us in this modern era.”

It’s an honor, he says, to be serving on the Steering Committee of the MAP Commission, along with the co-chairs, Very Rev. Lawrence D’Anjou, vicar general of the diocese, and Rick Medeiros.

Equally important, Father Brandon chairs the MAP subcommittee on priests. The task of that subcommittee is to support the priest survey portion of the process and, with the subcommittee’s team of priests, will analyze resulting data for consideration by Bishop Barber, highlighting the great gifts exhibited by our courageous priests.

How to Best Serve Our Priests

The goal is to create an experience for priests that will benefit their ongoing formation, providing clarity on preferences and skills. It is critical that 100% of the active priests will have completed their personal surveys. The team will provide mentors and mentorship to the priests in the diocese as they examine their individual strengths relating to parish life. Retired priests’ participation provides wisdom and expertise about where the diocese has been. The goal is for priests to come through this process with a deeper awareness of leadership preferences and skills, a future-oriented growth plan and a network for pastoral support.

What’s Next?

Father Brandon reminds us that this process can only be effective if we begin with trusting in the power of the Gospel. Pope St. John Paul II once wrote that the ardent proclamation of the Gospel can “one day overwhelm someone and bring them to the decision to entrust themselves to Jesus Christ by faith.” (Catechesi Tradendae 25) We must hear again the story of what Jesus Christ has done for each of us personally.

Father Brandon reminds us of the Gospel: God created us out of infinite goodness and saw that we are “very good.” We were captured by the lies of the evil one, who tricked us into thinking that we can be happy without God. God sent his Son to be our Savior and Redeemer, who has humiliated the evil one and destroyed death, re-creating us and giving us access to the Father. We each have the invitation to respond deeply to get his world back. May all of us rediscover the power and beauty of this Good News to become the missionary disciples Jesus needs for our local Church.

Ultimately this is the Lord’s work, Father Brandon reminds us. God is the architect and He is leading our diocese. Therefore Father said, “Let us commit ourselves to ardent prayer and active discipleship for that is the key to unlocking a diocese committed to mission.”

Mission Alignment Process Prayer

Dear Father in heaven, look kindly upon the Diocese of Oakland as we take stock of the many gifts you have given us.

Send your Holy Spirit to inspire and guide us so that our efforts to proclaim the saving Gospel our Lord Jesus Christ more effectively may bear tremendous fruit.

May we, as your people, courageously proceed on this path of self-reflection and renewal.

In the end, with your divine assistance, we know that we cannot fail.

Holy Mary, Queen of the World and St. Francis de Sales, co-patrons of our Diocese, pray for us!
Why are we Catholic?

A DAUGHTER ILLUMINATES THE WAY FOR GENERATIONS TO COME

RECENTLY MY 10-YEAR-OLD GRANDDAUGHTER ASKED, “AT WHAT AGE DO WE DECIDE WHAT OUR RELIGION WILL BE?”

If you are like me, born and raised in a Catholic family, attending Catholic school and weekly Mass, you may not confront that decision until you are an adult, if ever. It is often when we are challenged to remain faithful to our religion that we must make that decision for ourselves.
It may be stressful to examine or defend our beliefs but ultimately it can make our religious journey more personal and meaningful.

I was faced with this when I married a non-Catholic. I knew a lot of theology, but it was an internal, unexplainable faith that kept me strong.

It wasn’t until years later, when my daughter, Allie, chose to be baptized that I heard my own feelings expressed in a way that I was never able to voice. My diligent Alexandra — known to us as Allie — had done the work to make the faith her own and, in doing so, was able to articulate her beliefs more clearly and beautifully than I had ever been able to do.

Allie began her spiritual search in high school, studying many religions. We had Buddha on the dresser for a while, followed by several Hindu goddesses. Allie attended church and temple services and had many cherished Jewish, Christian and Muslim friends.

I knew she was actively exploring but we did not discuss it very much. I could see she was sincere in her love for God and was pursuing her path with so much integrity; I did not want to interfere.

However, I will not deny my overwhelming joy and gratefulness the day she told me that she had made her decision and wanted to be baptized. Allie had found beauty in all the religions she studied but ultimately the Christian faith provided the closeness to God she was looking for.

In Allie’s words:
“Christianity asks a lot of us — I like that I am called to be the most loving person I can possibly be, but also provides the help I need by an ever-faithful Presence. I am moved by a God who understands suffering and pain and was willing to come into the world in a human body. No other religion has a God who would do this, suffer and die just as we must do. This is a God who loves and forgives and leads me to do the same. This is a God I want to spend eternity with. The Catholic Church excites me because it is so universal and makes me feel connected to a body of holy people around the world. There is music and ritual to match every culture, but at the same time, the central prayers of the Mass are the same in Africa, Israel, Ireland or wherever you may be. I feel at home everywhere in this Religion.”

Allie went on to be baptized and confirmed. Motivated by the desire to love and serve, she learned Spanish, went on medical trips to Third World countries, became an emergency medical technician and graduated from medical school. Allie was not given a long life; we lost her in a plane accident when she was 28.

Her faithfulness to God still inspires me, and I believe, as Father Al Moser announced at her burial, “Your family now has its own saint.” She will have a lasting effect on my grandchildren, as they are all proud of Aunt Allie.

“This is a God who loves and forgives and leads me to do the same. This is a God I want to spend eternity with.” — Allie Greene
IN 2021, OAKLAND SUFFERED A SURGE IN HOMICIDES. BY THE END OF SEPTEMBER, MORE THAN 100 PEOPLE HAD BEEN SLAIN IN OAKLAND, AND THE CARNAGE SHOWED NO SIGNS OF ABATING.

That means more volunteer work for Rich Laufenberg, a member of St. Columba Parish in Oakland.

Since 2004, Rich has been making and erecting stark crosses to be placed in front of the church on busy San Pablo Avenue. Each memorializes another Oakland homicide victim. Each cross bears an Oakland homicide victim's first name, age and the date they were slain.

The display starts anew each new year. The first few crosses reflect early January killings. The display continues to grow until the space is crowded near the end of the year.

On New Year’s Eve, the crosses are taken down, carried into the church and placed at the altar for an afternoon memorial service.

The purpose is clear: to make people more aware of the carnage taking place on the streets of Oakland. The parish wants to be sure that the homicide victims are more than just stark numbers; they were real people.

“We want to raise community awareness of the magnitude of the issue,” Rich emphasizes.

“Even one murder is too many!”

STORY BY
AL DONNER
Al Donner is a longtime journalist and parishoner at Santa Maria Parish in Orinda.

PHOTO BY
AL DONNER
“One is too many,” he says pausing and shaking his head at the carnage that has surged in 2021.

The display of remembrance crosses began in 2004 when Father Jayson Landeza, then the pastor of St. Columba, started erecting them on the church lawn. As Oakland's homicide rate continued surging, he asked Rich to help with the task.

Rich agreed and is still at work. He now frequently is in his home workshop cutting, joining, sanding and painting the wooden crosses.

He finishes each by adding another Oakland homicide victim’s first name, their date of death and their age. He erects the crosses on the lawn in front of the church. Each represents another shooting victim’s name to the heavy traffic on the busy street. It is St. Columba’s effort to bring the evil of gun violence to more people.

Underscoring the gun violence message, Rich adds that he sometimes hears shooting on nearby streets while erecting the crosses.

And he has had people directly affected talk to him. “A woman came up once and asked if she could have the cross to take home,” he recalls. “She explained that she knew the victim herself.” He gave it to her.

Gun deaths reach all elements of the Oakland community. While the average fatality age is 35, he has painted crosses for a baby of 1 and a person of 75.

“We want to raise community awareness of its magnitude,” Rich explains. “We want to come to a point where these crosses are no longer needed — when there are no more murders.

“One murder is too many!”

This New Year’s Eve afternoon, parishioners and friends will gather in front of the church. Each will take a cross from the lawn, walk into the church and place it before the altar. A short prayer service will recall the people who died from gun violence in Oakland in 2021.

Then Rich will gather up the crosses, put them in storage and prepare to repaint them as the coming year’s Oakland homicide victims emerge with new names, ages and dates.

His greater goal is that the crosses ministry not be needed.

“Even one murder is too many!”

Rich works and prays for that day, along with the entire St. Columba community.

“The crosses in front of St. Columba Church, as seen in late October, will be removed in a ceremony at 3 p.m. Dec. 31 at 6401 San Pablo Avenue, Oakland. As of Oct. 30, 117 deaths in Oakland are being investigated as homicides.

PHOTO BY MICHELE JURICH

We want to come to a point where these crosses are no longer needed — when there are no more murders.”
From its humble beginning in 1871 to its 150th anniversary celebration in 2021, St. Anthony Church has reflected Oakland’s San Antonio neighborhood.

As a community of African-American, Eritrean, Filipino, Latino and Vietnamese Catholics who make the parish its home gathered to celebrate, and witness the blessing of two new outdoor statues — one of Our Lady of La Vang, and the other, Our Lady of Guadalupe — the beauty and diversity of the parish, which, since 2017, has been combined with nearby Mary Help of Christians, was on full display.

Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ celebrated the Mass, which was concelebrated by pastors and parochial vicars who have served at the parish over the years.

Parishioners compiled a book, *Commemorating 150 Years of St. Anthony’s Parish*, for the event. The team of parishioners credited the work of Father William Abeloe, and built upon the work he did to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the parish. In addition to his vocation as a priest, Father Abeloe was an author, lecturer, teacher and researcher in the field of California historical landmarks.
Father Ghebriel Woldai serves as temporary parochial administrator of the parish. Rev. Huong Dinh, who was ordained to the priesthood in May, serves as parochial vicar.

When first established, the St. Anthony Parish community was primarily Irish and Portuguese. By the beginning of its second century, its population had grown to include substantial numbers of Black, Filipino and Mexican parishioners. Over the years, the authors note, the community diversified, bringing new energy and devotions to the parish. The Filipino community, for example, devoted to patron St. Lorenzo Ruiz, worships at 8 a.m. Sundays.

For the growing Latino community, a bilingual Mass was offered in the early 1970s, with the first Spanish Mass celebrated around 1976, when Rev. Msgr. Antonio Valdivia became pastor. The community’s devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe is celebrated not only in daily life, but in one of the outdoor statues dedicated before the celebration Mass.

The companion statue honors Our Lady of La Vang, a devotion of the Vietnamese community. In 1991, then-Bishop John Cummins granted permission for the Vietnamese community that settled in Oakland to make its home at St. Anthony Parish. Today, at least four

CONTINUED ON PAGE 18
Masses a week are celebrated in the native language. The Vietnamese Martyrs Mass in November includes a procession around the church property.

The newest community to make its home at St. Anthony-Mary Help of Christians is the Eritrean Catholic community. Most of the Eritrean Catholics of the Bay Area immigrated to the United States as refugees from Europe and Sudan in the late 1980s; a second group emigrated from Sudan in the latter part of 2000. Resettlement programs conducted by the United States and the United Nations helped bring those displaced by the 30-year war between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Some displaced later came through resettlement programs or on their own.

After making its home in Berkeley at St. Joseph the Worker Parish, the community moved in
“We must work together as people of God fostering a respect of life and a love for our neighbor to eliminate poverty, homelessness and injustice in our community.”

FATHER GHEBRIEL WOLDAI
2021
It’s not often that you meet someone who decides to prepare for sacraments at age 90.

Married to Sylvia for 62 years, Kyle Griggs has been a widower for four years. Still heartbroken and a self-proclaimed pessimist, he thinks that she would appreciate his efforts. Here is his Sacred Story, as told to Tina Gregory at St. Michael Parish in Livermore:

Where did you meet Sylvia?
I grew up in Fresno, but I went to Taft, a junior college, for one semester before getting drafted into the Army. I had an aunt and uncle who lived in McKittrick nearby, and they were like a second set of parents there. So, when I went to school there, I met her at a Beer Bust! People would accumulate on weekends in such a hot climate over a case or two (or more) of beer. She was there, and I was there. She wrote to me while I was in Korea. We were married for 62 years and had seven children. They have all moved out of the state. Oh, I have one hanger-on, still living here in California, but he and his family are on their way out too as soon as he retires. They are scattered all over, including one in Canada.

What did you do in the Army?
I was drafted. I went willingly, but not happily. I was Army Infantry as a company clerk. I had taken typing in high school, and I had two years of college chemistry at that point, so I thought I could do well at a MASH hospital. I walked down there and talked to them, and they accepted me. When I showed up with my baggage, someone had blocked my transfer, and I got sent back. That wasn't entirely bad because I spent a month or so as an infantryman — a rifleman, the lowest form of life! — but then the sergeant rotated home. I took his job because I could type! And so that's where I stayed until I got out. I came home and finished my chemistry degree at San Jose State in 1956.
Then you moved to Livermore?
Yes, we moved to Livermore in 1959, and I worked at the Lab as a chemist for 32 years. Sylvia and I were both Catholic. Well, she was really the Catholic. She grew up Catholic; I did not. I was baptized at birth but didn’t get any catechism, and I never received Communion or Confirmation. We were always at St. Michael’s Sunday Mass at 6:45 a.m. I lost her four years ago to pancreatic cancer. I’m still suffering from it.
I’m so sorry for your loss.
Thank you.
What did you do at the Lawrence Livermore Lab?
I was a chemist at the Lab, and I mainly did an analysis of toxic materials. I would analyze samples to ensure that they were being contained and that people weren’t breathing them. It’s not very exciting, but that’s what I did for 32 years.
What made you want to prepare for First Communion and Confirmation?
I thought maybe Sylvia would appreciate it. Appreciate the effort. My daughter said it wouldn’t be enough of a reason and that we should come up with a better one. But I saw the ad in the Friday Flocknote on my computer, giving information about how adults could complete sacraments. After seeing it a few times, I finally got up enough courage to not delete it. So I sent an email, and here I am.
Any reason is a good reason to start. Where are you in your preparation?
Confession. Confession is going to really be something. I’ve got 90 years of sin piled up. Father John [Pietruszka, parochial vicar] says he has heard it all. I told him that if he’s missed any, I’m going to fill in the gaps! I’m not looking forward to it. And that’s where I stand right now. In talking to her on the phone the other day, my daughter reminded me that one of my worst sins is that I’m not very forgiving. I take exception to those whom I feel have offended me, and I hold a grudge. I hadn’t even considered that at all until the conversation with her came up.
Well, that is a shift, to notice what your daughter pointed out.
I suppose. I can’t think of anything else that has changed, but my mind is going. Yeah, happens with age.
One way to look at Confession is to think of it like a doctor’s office with the perfect cure or a health spa for your soul.
Confession is going to really be something. I’ve got 90 years of sin piled up. Father John says he has heard it all. I told him that if he’s missed any, I’m going to fill in the gaps!
Ha! That is a big reach in my case. Well, I’ve not killed anybody! I probably angered people. I had a typical adolescent male upbringing. Shame, shame on me. I’m not proud of it. The only thing I don’t know how to give up is that I can hold a grudge and keep it. Yeah, and that it’s going to be a very difficult habit for me to break.
What would surprise you the most?
To actually hear the words of absolution. That would be surprising.
And you’re back to celebrating Mass?
Yes, I come every Sunday. Well, lately I’ve been coming on Saturday evenings. When Sylvia was here, we always went to 6:45 a.m. Always. Since then, I can’t get up that early. Saturday at 9 p.m. works better for me.
Are you enjoying your catechism classes?
I think so. I’m meeting with Lisa Malone, who is very knowledgeable and very friendly. She’s getting me up to speed. She and I think along the same lines, so we do get along well.
Is there anything that you need from the parish? Do you want people to pray for you?
Well, I know I should say yes. But I will be truthful with you, and I’ll say, “okay.” Just okay, just all right. But goodness knows I can use all the help I get!
Well, we will take your “okay” and happily pray for you, Kyle! Thank you for sharing your story. We look forward to your First Communion and Confirmation day!
Thank you for your time. It was a pleasure to meet you.
Joy and encouraging vocations

BY SISTER CONSTANCE VEIT, LSP
Sister Constance Veit is director of communications for the Little Sisters of the Poor.
PHOTO: COURTESY

I do a lot of outreach to the young on behalf of my religious congregation, so I try to be aware of trends in vocations work and the common traits of emerging generations.

Recently, I took some time to review the latest Study on Religious Vocations, co-sponsored by the National Religious Vocation Conference and the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, hoping that it would give me an “aha moment” on how to interest young women in our community of Little Sisters of the Poor.

I was struck by a section of the report entitled Intergenerational Living. According to the 2020 NRVC/CARA study, a mere 13 percent of perpetually professed members of religious communities are younger than 60, while the same proportion are at least 90 years of age.

These are pretty sobering statistics!

I was consoled to read the following testimony from a young religious: “It is beautiful to have all different generations and ethnicities in one community, in one house, if we allow ourselves to see that beauty.”

What a hope-filled attitude on the part of a young religious! It really inspired me to stop bemoaning the aging of our religious communities and start seeing the beauty.

So, as we observe National Vocations Awareness Week, I would like to address a message of hope to my fellow women and men religious who, like me, are not so young anymore!

May you too take heart in realizing that young people seeking religious life are not as deterred by the older demographics of most of our communities as we thought. They don’t seem to mind that many of us are

CONTINUED ON PAGE 24

Pope Francis has said, ‘If the warmth of God, of his love, of his tenderness is not in our own hearts, then how can we, who are poor sinners, warm the heart of others.’

Sister Constance Veit, LSP, lower left, enjoys community time in San Francisco. Next to her is Sister Cecilia Mary Sartorius, who died in October. Sister Cecilia served as a superior for many years and in many locations, influencing younger Little Sisters with her joyful spirit. During the Year for Consecrated Life, she wrote, “Pope Francis has said, ‘If the warmth of God, of his love, of his tenderness is not in our own hearts, then how can we, who are poor sinners, warm the heart of others.’ I have been blessed to possess this warmth and joy throughout my entire religious life. On reflecting on my past 50 years of consecrated life, I see how often minor fears and inward hurdles, when handled to the best of my ability, would somehow produce a positive outcome and were rewarded with a deepening of joy.”
As we grow older, we should never lose that enthusiasm and openness to an ever greater reality.

God wants to give them more. God “values and respects you,” we might say to them, borrowing from the pope’s words “but he also keeps offering you more: more of his friendship, more fervor in prayer, more hunger for his word, more longing to receive Christ in the Eucharist, more desire to live his Gospel, more inner strength, more peace and spiritual joy.”

This joy is something about which the pope very often speaks, and it is something that speaks deeply to young people in their vocational discernment. It is something they see in the quality of a gaze or a smile, in the serenity with which a consecrated person embraces trials or suffering, and in the generous gift of self to the poor day after day.

Pope Francis insisted on joy in a recent speech to Discalced Carmelites, “It is ugly to see consecrated men and women with a long face. It is ugly, it is ugly. Joy must come from within: that joy that is peace, an expression of friendship.” God forbid that any of us become ugly as we grow older!

In Christus Vivit, the exhortation he wrote following the synod on young people in the life of the Church, Pope Francis reminded us that Christ is alive and he wants us to be fully alive.

“When you feel you are growing old out of sorrow, resentment or fear,” he wrote, “He will always be there to restore your strength and your hope.”

So, let’s ask Jesus, “himself eternally young,” to give us hearts that are ever young and capable of loving, ready to welcome the new generations who knock on our doors just as Elizabeth welcomed the Virgin Mary into her home in the Visitation.

Let’s witness to these young women and men the JOY that fills our hearts, and is eager to fill theirs as well, if only they give themselves to Him! ✝
ST. FRANCIS, CONCORD: WALKING WITH MOMS IN NEED

Despite the harsh, rainy weather, Mommy and Baby Day at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Concord was a blessed event. On Oct. 24, the parish celebrated Walking with Moms in Need, a program of the USCCB that has begun in the Diocese of Oakland under the auspices of the Office of Life and Justice. Generous donors collected diapers and wipes for the babies. In addition, donations of $500 in cash and $500 in gift cards were gratefully received. Elida Leyva and Maria Roldan, lay missionaries from the Missionary Servants of the Word, are assisting at the parish and helped at the event, which also brought in some darling clothes.

MORE INFORMATION: oakdiocese.org/momsinneed

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EVANGELIST TAKES FAITH TO THE STREETS

Some of us speak about our faith in small groups of like-minded individuals, and some are able to carry the message beyond church and home.

David Brandt is doing both. He leads the Berkeley chapter of the St. Paul Street Evangelization. His group, founded in 2014, sets up a table with posters, brochures and rosaries in places like just steps away from the downtown Berkeley BART station, the Berkeley Farmers Market, the Pinole Car Show and shopping districts such as the El Cerrito Plaza and Fourth Street in Berkeley.

“Would you like a free rosary?” is a conversation starter. If someone says yes, he said, “The first thing they try to do is to put it around the neck. I say, ‘Well, this is more like a meditation on the life of Christ.’”

As leader, David evangelizes with a team of two or three volunteers.

“You have to train people how to say it and gauge people with an open heart, being OK whatever the answer is,” he said. “Some people say no, stop, turn 180 degrees and come back to us and start a discussion.”

Some say no, or say something over their shoulder as they walk away.

David Brandt is undaunted. He has work to do.

“There’s a lot of attention paid in the Catholic Church to the corporal works of mercy. Those are good things to do. We know from Matthew 25 about Jesus telling his disciples, if you haven’t done this to your brothers, you haven’t done it for me. There’s a heavy amount of attention on the corporal works of mercy.

“In our culture, the real need is more the spiritual works of mercy: instructing the ignorant, praying for the living and the dead, correcting the sinner, all those things. It makes me think of the story of Mother Teresa when she came to visit the United States. A reporter asked her to compare the poverty in the United States to the poverty in India. What she said was: The poverty in the West is worse because it’s a spiritual poverty.

“To me, the spiritual works of mercy are the most important. They’re the ones that bring with them the most risk. It’s really easy to give a hungry person food. You’re
A shorter title was needed and he just chose Berkeley.

Thinking about doing it and doing it are two different things. He went to a Patrick Madrid two-day class to become a certified apologist. "Now I'm ready," he recalled.

Before street evangelizing for the first time, he and his team attended Mass at St. Joseph the Worker Church in Berkeley. The team requested a blessing from Father Kenneth Nobrega, who was pastor at the time. The evangelists took a short walk to the Berkeley BART station and set up a table. "It turns out that apologetics were not a big deal," David said. "If you offer rosaries to 10 people, one will stop the talk; of those, one in five has issues with the Church. A lot of people who stopped are spiritually starving. They were so grateful to see us.

"I underestimated the level of spiritual hunger," he said. "I was blessed to be the person to meet them."

David is a cemetery counselor with Catholic Funeral & Cemetery Services, where his faith fits comfortably into his work.

Although David doesn’t expect feedback in his evangelization efforts, sometimes he gets it. "At El Cerrito Plaza, I gave a young man a rosary. He said, 'You already gave me a rosary last week. As a matter of fact, I've already been back to Church.'"

"It got me back in gear," he said. He began to listen to EWTN radio and television, called to obtain the knowledge that enabled him to share the faith with everyone through evangelization. He read books, engulfed with a desire, an insatiable hunger to learn more. He was working in finance, serving financial advisers, and didn’t consider this a natural environment for evangelization at work.

"I had to drive to do something. I heard a Catholic radio interview with Steve Dawson, who founded St. Paul Street Evangelization. I remember thinking, 'This is it. I'm going to do it.'"

When he got to a computer, he looked up the website and found a local chapter in San Francisco. "The guy would go out on Fridays but that didn't fit my schedule," he said. Undaunted, he found he could train for $15 a month.

He completed the online training and he started calling his Cursillo friends, but they were not, he found, drawn to evangelize in the same way.

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East Bay says ‘Here I Am’ in campaign to curb antisemitism

Around 180 East Bay community members, including public officials and the mayor of Oakland, gathered on Oct. 25 in the courtyard at Oakland’s Temple Beth Abraham, joined by 100 others streaming the event online, united by the common goal to expose and fight antisemitism with a broad network of allies.

The event was part of a campaign spearheaded by the S.F.-based Jewish Community Relations Council with support from the S.F.-based Jewish Community Federation. The “Here I Am” initiative responds to growing antisemitic incidents and rhetoric, including abuse impacting Bay Area youth on social media.

Elected officials and civic leaders across the East Bay are participating in the campaign. The JCRC launched the website HereIAmStories.org at the end of July and is gathering local leaders to speak at six regional meetings throughout the year.

“We heard from countless parents and teachers that their kids were being bullied on TikTok and Instagram, and traditionally community relations is face-to-face,” said Tyler Gregory, the executive director of JCRC. “But we understood that we needed to impact the conversation where it was happening, and that was online.”

The website launched in the wake of the escalating violence between Israel and Gaza in May, which correlated to a surge in antisemitic violence and speech nationwide.

In the month of May alone, antisemitic incidents in the United States doubled compared to May 2020, according to an analysis from the Anti-Defamation League’s Center on Extremism. Incidents were categorized into harassment, vandalism and assault. The analysis found that assaults increased the most.

The campaign includes videos from San Francisco Mayor London Breed and Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf, who have shared personal stories of experiencing and standing up to antisemitism. The landing site also encourages people to learn about allyship, seek out mental health resources and is a platform for people to “do a deep dive on antisemitism,” Gregory said.

“I think it is just a very important time,” said Schaaf, who is Jewish. “The stories that I’ve heard from our Jewish children are heartbreaking. With the political events in the world, we are seeing a huge uptick in antisemitism, and we’ve got to snuff it out immediately.”

The website is targeted toward non-Jewish online users. “I think the frustration our community is feeling is...
that we know about it, no one else is really picking up on it, so we are trying to break through that wall and do it online also,” Gregory said.

“That’s the important message, telling the community at large, ‘Here I Am, but I want you here, too. I want you in on it,’” said state Sen. Bob Wiekowski, who represents District 10.

It’s one reason Kyla Johnson-Trammel, the superintendent of Oakland Unified School District, spoke at Monday’s gathering. Johnson-Trammel, a Black woman who stands as an ally with the Jewish community, said OUSD is investing in anti-racist training “so that people feel they have the skills to stand in that discomfort and push through what they see that’s not right, so we can have a different outcome. That’s my hope and my vision for our children.”

Monday's event was the second out of six regional campaign promotional events. JCRC hosted one in San Francisco in August and will be coming to Santa Clara County in December for a Hanukkah candlelighting event. Events are planned for San Mateo, Contra Costa and Marin counties in 2022.

The phrase “Here I Am” is the English translation of “Hineni,” the Hebrew word that appears at least 14 times in the Torah, Rabbi Mark Bloom of Temple Beth Abraham explained.

The website took inspiration from the Stop AAPI Hate movement that emerged during the pandemic amid an escalation of hate against API seniors and community members.

“The seeds of antisemitism, anti-black discrimination, AAPI hate, these are all interrelated,” Schaaf said, “and we must bond together as one loving community and cast out hatred and discrimination.”

“Considered one of the fathers of Irish monasticism, St. Finnian founded Clonard Abbey in Ireland in 520. His vast knowledge of Scripture and skills as a teacher, coupled with his unwavering dedication to live simply, inspired the vocations of missionaries who established monasteries in Europe. These institutions went on to become some of the most influential centers of Christian thought in the Middle Ages.”

Finnian was born in 470 in County Carlow and studied with St. Forthchern of Trim, a disciple of St. Patrick, before traveling to Wales and France to study. Participating in the austere lifestyle of the monks at Tours strongly influenced his vision for religious life. Finnian went back to Wales for several years to study Scripture before returning to Ireland. While there, he copied the Vulgate Bible written by St. Jerome and several other classics.

Upon his return to Ireland, he founded two monasteries there before teaching at St. Brigid’s monastery in Kildare. According to tradition, an angel led him to an uninhabited area at Clonard where he built a small dwelling of clay and wattle to study, pray and live simply. Word of Finnian’s knowledge and holiness attracted laypeople, clerics, abbots and even bishops. He established Clonard Abbey in 520, modeled on the traditions of early Christian hermits and focused on the study of Scripture. It is said that as many as 3,000 monks studied there at one time. Over the centuries, thousands of monks and theologians were drawn to St. Finnian’s monastery to study the works of the Church Fathers and the Scriptures.

Finnian’s work also influenced the practice of personal penance. The Penitential of Finnian focuses on developing virtue to overcome sinful behavior, and is considered one of the oldest surviving texts of its kind. Finnian died from the plague in 549.
FROM THE OFFICE OF THE BISHOP

DIOCESAN CORE TEAM ANNOUNCED FOR SYNOD 2021-2023

Bishop Michael C. Barber, SJ has appointed Father Jimmy Macalinao as the diocesan point of contact for Synod 2021-2023, a universal synod called by Pope Francis which opened on Oct. 10, 60 years after Pope St. John XXIII opened the Second Vatican Council.

Synod is a process used by many churches, rooted in the history of the Catholic Church. A Greek word, Synod can be interpreted as “walking together.” The International Theological Commission (ITC) describes synodality as “the path along which the People of God walk together. Equally, it refers to the Lord Jesus, who presents Himself as ‘the way, the truth and the life’ (Jn 14:6) and to the fact that Christians, His followers, were originally called ‘followers of the Way.’... Synodality ought to be expressed in the Church’s ordinary way of living and working.”

Father Macalinao said the Diocese of Oakland has been, and is, experiencing synodality already. “There are many processes, especially in recent years, which we could offer as examples of synodality in our diocese,” he said, “but the one which is truly diocesan-wide is our Mission Alignment Process, or MAP.”

The MAP is intended to allow all Catholics to have input on the future of the Church in the diocese.

The universal Synod 2021-2023 will culminate in a gathering of bishops from throughout the world in 2023. Leading up to that meeting, every diocese in the world is engaging in a consultation process this fall and next spring. The results of that consultation in the United States will be given to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, to be compiled and forwarded to the Holy See.

“The preparatory documents emphasize the process must consider both existing structures and new opportunities for consultation,” Father Macalinao explained. “Our diocese has been, and is, continuing, to grow in our appreciation of synodality. I am very encouraged by the fact that our Mission Alignment Process is coinciding with the universal Synod. I believe it is an affirmation from the Holy Spirit that we are already journeying together!”

Members of the Oakland Diocese’s Synod Core Team are: Father Jimmy Macalinao, diocesan director of the Office of Faith Formation and Evangelization; Father Lawrence D’Anjou, diocesan vicar general; Cristina Hernández, diocesan coordinator of Office for Life and Justice; Jennifer Lozada, member of Most Holy Rosary Parish, Antioch; Joseph Nufable, diocesan coordinator of youth ministry and RCIA; Amanda Wehrman, member of Newman Hall-Holy Spirit Parish, Berkeley; and Elsa Zavala, member of St. Joseph Parish, Pinole.
Remembering those who we have laid to rest in our Catholic Cemeteries during the month of September.

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Nestor Andaya
Josephine Ang
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Howard Biggs
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Gary Caruso
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Norma Shadde
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Cosette Arnt Bouchard
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William Crain
Benita Daranciang
Kathleen Darcy
Patricia Damer
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Ashley Steven Dias
Michael Ducasse
Luna Esparza
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Kristin Fiedor
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