

Our Savior's Birth Revealed

In the First Reading, we find Isaiah prophesying the virgin birth of the Messiah. Although King Ahaz resists the sign of the Lord, for he preferred relying on his own strength to trusting in the Lord; for the good of Israel the prophet Isaiah promises the Lord's coming into the world through a Virgin who would name Him Emmanuel. • The Responsorial is a hymn of praise used in processions to the temple. The intent is to *include* those ready to convert and *remind* us that we too must live a virtuous life if we expect to live with the Lord. Our daily living should be consistent with our Christian commitment. • In the Second Reading, St Paul is trying to explain to the Romans, in terms they will understand, that Jesus is the fulfillment of God's promises to the Jews. He harkens back to Our Lord's human ancestry through King David and the public and universal manifestation of His divine power through His resurrection from the dead. • The Gospel ties the readings together. We find the Virgin birth of Christ revealed to St Joseph, *a descendant of King David and Mary's betrothed*. In this Gospel, St Matthew quotes from Isaiah in the First Reading, to show that Jesus is the fulfillment of all God's promises to the Israel of the old covenant. Here, St Matthew, like St Luke, wants us to know that Our Lord was conceived in a Virginal womb chosen by God and conceived in a Divine manner, through a special intervention of the Holy Spirit. We are made to understand that this *Emmanuel*, Divinely conceived in a Virgin, this "*God with us*" is our Savior. His human descendant is from the royal

Faith First

lineage of King David and His Divine lineage is through the sacred vessel of the Virgin Mary. This Savior is God's gift of redemption to us. This is our Christmas.

Prayer of the Week

Let us pray as Advent draws to a close for the faith that opens our lives to the Spirit of God. • Father, all-powerful God, your eternal Word took flesh on our earth when the Virgin Mary placed her life at the service of your plan. Lift our minds in watchful hope to hear the voice which announces his glory and open our minds to receive the Spirit who prepares us for his coming. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Words of Appreciation

Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love (Saint Teresa of Calcutta). • Thank you to all who make Christmas so special here at Sacred Heart!

Retreat for Women

Join the women of Sacred Heart signing up for the annual retreat at Christ the King Retreat Center on the weekend of January 10-12, 2020. The theme for the retreat will be "Come and See," with reflections taken from the Gospel of St. John. Consider giving the gift of a retreat this Christmas! • For information? Call the Retreat Center 916-725-4720 or Kim at 916-479-1736. Sign-up forms are also found in the church vestibule.

O Radiant Dawn...come and shine on those who dwell in darkness...

Schedule of Masses

Christmas Eve
 Tuesday, December 24
 4 pm (carols at 3:30 pm) - Family Mass
 6:30 pm (carols at 6 pm) - Family Mass
 10 pm with Schola Cantorum (carols at 9:30 pm)
 No Mass at Midnight.

Christmas Day
 Wednesday, December 25
 8 am and 10 am

New Year Eve & Day
 Tuesday, December 31 at 5:30 pm
 Wednesday, January 1 at 9 am

In Our Prayers

Daily Mass Intentions

December 22 - December 29

Sun	8:00am	Don & Anita Cerqui (+)
	9:30am	Kang Simon Lee (+)
	11:00am	For the People of the Parish
Mon	8:00am	George Kovacevich (+)
Tue	8:00am	Pierre-Henri Guichard (+)
	4:00pm	Joe Gill (+)
	6:30pm	Terence McCartan (+)
	10:00pm	For the People of the Parish
Wed	8:00am	Int...Donnald Anderson
	10:00am	Sister Bridget Mary Flynn (+)
Thu	8:00am	Antun Vucica & family (+)
Fri	8:00am	Margaret Mayer (+)
Sat	9:00am	Altar Society Members (+)
	5:30pm	Int...Lucas Santos
Sun	8:00am	W. Poulson (+)
	9:30am	Betty Baumgartner (+)
	11:00am	For the People of the Parish

In Memoriam

- Rev. Philip Brady • October 6, 1929
- Msgr. Michael Lyons • May 27, 1958
- Msgr. Gerald O'Driscoll • August 7, 1976
- Msgr. Thomas Markham • July 12, 1989
- Msgr. Edmund O'Neill • March 8, 1994
- Rev. Michael O'Hara • December 19, 2001

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord.

Please Pray for the Sick

Helena Enright, Barbara Testa, John Sarrow, Thomas Wolfanger, John Vostrez, Robin Aurelius, Diana Zuniga, Suzy Riehl, Isabel Harper, Mark Zane, Richard Honey, Dale Wooldridge, Donnald Anderson, Nancy McGarry, Patrick Valenzuela, Michael Fletcher, Gary Pepe, William Daniel Reed, Stephanie Merenda, Victoria Generoso, Jim Collins, Robert Arkebauer, Libby Basurto, Dena Foster-Cook, Marie Schumacher, Ralph Goodall, Josephine Haddock, G.R. Gurley, Darren Stewart, Marge Mugartegui, Angel Curiel, Phillip Worth, Sonia Damiano, Ava Grace Arnold, Karen Amnon, Mary Terese Henricksen, Pamela Saenz, Stan Boyd, David Hunn, Addison Parker, Brett Stover, Norma Clark, Robert Clark, Jr.

Parish Office Closed

The Parish Office will be closed on Tuesday and Wednesday, December 24 and 25 and Wednesday, January 1 for Christmas and New Year's. Of course, you may leave a message on the office extension (ext. 2) on those days; your call will be returned when the office reopens.

Prayer for Life Novena

At the beginning of the new Church Year, parishioners are invited to say a Prayer of Life Novena at their convenience. Those who would prefer to say it in a group setting, may attend the Saturday 9:00 am Mass where it will be said after Mass for nine consecutive Saturdays, following the recitation of the Rosary starting December 14, 2019. • Copies of the Novena are available in the church vestibule courtesy of the Knights of Columbus.

Advent Giving Tree

Thank you to all who have donated gifts to those in need through our Giving Tree. If you have not yet returned your gift, please do so at your earliest convenience. Gift cards may be left in the Parish Office mailbox. Again, thank you for bringing some Christmas joy to our neighbors in need.

2020 Church Calendars

The 2020 calendars are available for parishioners to pick up after Mass in the church vestibule. They have been made available through the courtesy of the Catholic Funeral & Cemetery Services, a ministry of the Diocese of Sacramento. Be sure to read the message from Bishop Soto in front of the calendar. • In order to make sure every parishioner who wants a calendar receives one, please take only one calendar this weekend. If you would like to have a second one extra calendars will be made available next weekend.

Parish School Christmas Break

Students, teachers and staff will enjoy the Christmas holiday this year starting December 23. School will resume on Monday, January 6. • Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from Sacred Heart Parish School.

Consider Making an End of Year Gift

Many parishioners make a special end of year gift to the Parish. This is very much appreciated, enabling the Parish to meet the growing expenses of Parish operations. Such a gift has the added benefit of being tax deductible. You may want to designate your gift to *Sacred Heart Building Fund* for the maintenance and preservation of our church, rectory, and parish hall or to *Sacred Heart Parish School Endowment Foundation* for school families needing tuition assistance or to *Sacred Heart Church* for its general operations. • We are most grateful for our parishioners' regular and special donations to second collections throughout the year. • If you are not contributing on a regular basis, please consider doing so. If you have not increased your weekly contribution in some time, and your financial circumstances allow you to do so, please consider increasing your weekly contribution. Like your household expenses, parish expenses continue to increase. • Thank you for considering this end-of-year appeal.

Meetings & Events

Christmas Meal Blessing

Let us pray. God of love, Father of all, the darkness that covered the earth has given way to the bright dawn of Your Word made flesh. Make us a people of this light. Make us faithful to Your Word, that we may bring Your life to a waiting world. By the coming of Your Son, Jesus, may the hungry be filled with good things, and may our family and our home be blessed. Bless this food on our Christmas table, which is a gift from You, and bless those who prepared it. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Altar Society News

A volunteer is needed to care for the altar servers' vestments for January--March. Duties include a weekly check that garments are properly sized and hung; set aside dirty red robes for dry cleaning; wash and iron white surplices at home as needed. Interested parishioners please contact Linda at 916-457-9572.

Religious Education Classes

The Catholic Faith Formation (CFF) classes for children attending a non-parochial school starts the Christmas break Monday, December 23. Classes resume on Tuesday, January 7.

Flu Season: No Communion Cup and Other Precautions

The flu season has come early this year. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) reports that the incidence of flu and flu-like illnesses is "widespread" and has reached a level requiring that we enact preventive measures to mitigate the possibility of infection at Mass. In order to protect the health and well

-being of everyone, Bishop Soto has issued the following directives: (1) The use of the Communion cup is suspended temporarily. (2) Please receive the Body of Christ in the hand. (3) Do not shake hands. Offer the Sign of Peace to those around you with a simple nod, saying "Peace be with you." (4) Do not hold hands during the Our Father. • The obligation to attend Mass on Sunday and other holy days does not apply to those who are sick. If you are sick, please stay home and take care of yourself. Thank you for your patience and understanding during this time. And pray for those who are sick. The administration of Holy Communion in both kinds will resume as soon as the Bishop deems it safe and prudent to do so.

Children's Church

The Children's Church program at the 9:30 am Sunday Mass will *not* be offered on December 29 and January 5. The program will resume on Sunday, January 12. If you are interested in helping periodically with the sessions, please contact Alicia at faliciafry@yahoo.com. (You do not need to have a child in the program to volunteer.)

Parish School Open House

You are invited to attend the Sacred Heart Parish School annual Open House on January 26, 2020 from 11:00 am - 1:00 pm. Please drop in to see our school, meet our teachers and learn a bit more about the opportunity for an excellent, affordable education. All are welcome.

Accepting Applications for 2020-2021

Sacred Heart Parish School is now accepting applications for Transitional Kindergarten and Kindergarten for next school year. Students in TK must be 4 years old by September 1, 2020. Kindergartners must be 5 by September 1, 2020. Applications may be found online at the school website (www.sacredheartschool.com) or in the school office. • If you have any questions, please call the School Office at 916-456-1576.