

From The Pastor's Desk

The readings for today could easily leave us confused because they seem to be at either end of the emotional spectrum. On one hand, we are told in the first reading that God will be dancing with shouts of joy on our behalf. Then, on the other hand, we are given a very stern warning from John the Baptist about the chaff that will burn in a fire that will never go out. What are we to make of these two extremes – the joy of God over us and the threat of punishment? As with many things in life, it may be a matter of balance – even if a very delicate kind of balance.

Perhaps the Church puts these two kinds of themes together for us so that we won't be living our spiritual lives on some cloud far away from the realities of our lives. This can be a problem when people divorce their spiritual lives from the rest of their lives and live a kind of two levelled existence. On one level, they have beautiful thoughts and feelings and seem to think that nothing in life can go wrong. On the other level, all that seems to matter are the day to day realities of life, like money and food. **We are urged to be joyful and happy in the Lord, while at the same time doing what we need to do in order to be following God's will in our daily lives.**

*He will exult with joy over you He will renew you by his love;
He will dance with shouts of joy for you As on a day of festival.
(Zeph. 3:14)*

Are you able to sense what the prophet Zephaniah is trying to do with those words? He wants to leave no doubt in our minds about how excited God is over us. That's right! **God is excited over us!** Does that seem like a strange idea to you? We get excited over things or people, but isn't God beyond all of that? Many of us grew up with a notion of God as an unmoved mover – one who was not affected by anything outside of his own being. But, that is not how the scriptures present God and that is not the picture of God we get from Jesus who desires to gather us to himself as a mother hen gathers her little ones.

The notion of unmoved mover is not one that inspires many of us to devotion and love. But a God who dances with joy because of us – now that is a different story. The scriptures want to give us a picture of a God who is for us – and who rejoices over who we are. After all, we are God's work of art, are we not? Shouldn't God be excited about us? **This season of Advent is calling us to prepare to welcome Christ.** Jesus comes to bring the love of God in a way that no one and nothing else could possibly do.

Have you ever experienced a person who loved you so much that you could feel that love every time that person came into your presence? When that person was around you, you could not help but feel surrounded by their love. You could almost reach out and touch it. That is the kind of love God has for each of us. **God is dancing with joy over us but what is even better is God's promise that God will renew us by his love.** We will be made into new persons through the overwhelming love of God.

May we all come to believe this joyful and loving God and come to joy and love for one another!

Fr. Joe

Weekly Readings

Sunday, Dec. 13 Zep 3: 14-18a; Phil 4:4-7; Lk 3: 10-18(9)
Monday, Dec. 14 Nm 24: 2-7, 15-17a; Mt 21:23-27
Tuesday, Dec. 15 Zep 3: 1-2, 9-13; Mt 21: 28-32
Wednesday, Dec. 16 Is 45: 6b-8, 18, 21b-25; Lk 7:18b-23
Thursday, Dec. 17 Gn 49: 2, 8-10; Mt 1: 1-17
Friday, Dec. 18 Jer 25:5-8; Mt 1: 28-25
Saturday, Dec. 19 Jgs 13: 2-7, 24-25; Lk 1: 5-25
Sunday, Dec. 20 Zep 3:14-18; Phil 4: 4-7; Lk 3: 10-18

Liturgy, Reconciliation & Activities

Sunday, Dec. 13 *Third Sunday of Advent*

7:00 a.m. St. Nicholas Breakfast
 8:00 a.m. Mass—†Zeb Baird
 9:00 a.m. PreK 3 Family Session
 9:15/11:15 a.m. Children's Faith Formation/Adult Clusters 1,2,3
 9:30 a.m. Mass—People of Holy Spirit
 11:30 a.m. Mass—† Salvatore DeYoreo
 5:30 p.m. Mass—† Henri Meuse

Monday, Dec. 14 *St. John of the Cross*

8:30 a.m. Mass—† Roland Rosslip
 6:30 p.m. Faith Formation Grade Level Coordinator Meeting

Tuesday, Dec. 15

8:30 a.m. Mass—† Jim Flusche
 5:00 p.m. Knights of Columbus Officers Meeting

Wednesday, Dec. 16

8:30 a.m. Mass—Intentions of Patrick Macenido
 9:00 a.m. Legion of Mary
 6:00 p.m. Family Prayer Group
 6:00 p.m. Natural Family Planning Meeting

Thursday, Dec. 17

8:30 a.m. Mass—Intentions of Al Alonzo
 12:00 p.m. **PARISH OFFICE CLOSED**— Staff Christmas Party
 7:00 p.m. Community Life Commission Meeting
 7:30 p.m. Choir Practice

Friday, Dec. 18

8:30 a.m. Mass—† Juana Jara

Saturday, Dec. 19

6:00 a.m. Mass—Simbang Gabi "Dawn Mass"
 8:30 a.m. Mass—† Juana Jara
 10:00 a.m. Children's Christmas Choir Practice
 3:30 p.m. Confessions until 5 p.m.
 4:00 p.m. Choir Practice
 5:30 p.m. Mass—† Felicidad Buenavintura
 6:30 p.m. Marriage Enrichment

Sunday, Dec. 20 *Fourth Sunday of Advent*

8:00 a.m. Mass—†Herb DeLeon
 9:30 a.m. Mass—† Isabel Luna
 11:30 a.m. Mass—† People of Holy Spirit
 1:00 p.m. Rehearsal for Christmas Vigil

Please pray for the Souls in Purgatory!

Faith Formation—Youth



Please support our youth and buy a poinsettia **TODAY AFTER MASS!** We are selling them for only \$12 to help support our Youth Stand for Life trip to Washington DC! They make great gifts for hostesses, teachers and co-workers! Thank you for your support!

Our Youth Christmas Party is **TONIGHT!** All grades will be celebrating Christmas together with crafts, games and fun!

Reminder! Youth Ministry will not meet the next two Sundays due to Christmas and New Years!


We will resume Youth Ministry **Sunday, Jan. 3.**

Sacramental Preparation

Now that the holidays are right around the corner, all scheduled sacramental preparation meetings for Reconciliation/First Communion and Confirmation will now be after the start of the 2016 New Year! However, if you missed a scheduled meeting and have not yet contacted **Lisa Estrada** or **Devyn Buschow** to schedule a make-up session, please do so in order to continue in the sacrament program.

Due to a major diocesan scheduling conflict, the **Children's First Reconciliation Celebration & Reception has been rescheduled for Monday, Jan. 11, 2016, at 7 p.m.** Parents, please be sure to change this on your calendar. The original date was Wednesday, Jan. 13, 2016.

Information and paperwork regarding infant Baptism (ages 6 and under) may be directed to **Lisa Estrada**. Our next baptismal preparation class for parents and godparents is **Saturday, Jan. 16, 2016**, from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. All completed paperwork must be turned in at least two weeks prior to the class date.



The Jubilee Year of Mercy celebration began Dec. 8 and will continue through Nov. 20, 2016.

The theme of the Year of Mercy is: **"Merciful like the Father"**. This serves as an invitation for all of us to follow the merciful example of God who asks us not to judge or condemn but to offer love and forgiveness instead.

This year's celebration will be a moment of true grace for all Christians and a re-awakening to continue along the path of the new evangelization and pastoral conversion

SPECIAL ADVENT LITURGY



Saturday, Dec. 19
Simbang Gabi
Mass: 6:00 AM

HOLIDAY HOURS: We will be open on first-come, first-served basis for **children 6 mos. - 5 yrs. Sunday, Dec. 20 and Sunday, Dec. 27** for both the 9:30 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. masses. Space is limited and we are not accepting reservations.

WE WILL BE CLOSED Christmas Eve & Christmas Day, and New Year's Eve & Day!

To access Child Care, ring the white bell at the entrance nearest the playground. Our program operates on donations only. Thank you for your continued generosity!

CHILD CARE NEWS

PLAN AHEAD FOR CHRISTMAS MASSES

Christmas Eve - Dec. 24
 Children's Mass 5:30 p.m. (LY Attendance: 925)
 Vigil Mass 8:30 p.m. (LY Attendance : 552)

Christmas Day - Dec. 25
 Midnight Mass 12:00 MIDNIGHT (LY Attendance: 631)
 Morning Mass 10:00 a.m.

Flowers for the Lord's Altar this week are in memory of **Charles Umehai**, requested by Mary Umehai.



The Sanctuary Lamp will burn this week in memory of **Jim Flusche**, requested by Mary Flusche.

Finance

Week of Dec. 1-7, 2015:

\$26,059.09	Weekly Contributions
(\$22,365.00)	Average Weekly Expenses
\$ 3,694.09	Surplus

Thank you for your contributions and may God Bless You!

CHILDREN'S FAITH FORMATION

Santa Day Care

*A Christmas Afternoon
Out for Parents*



This is the last weekend to register for Santa Day Care! Children's Faith Formation, Youth Ministry and our Childcare Ministry are providing four hours of fun and excitement for children, 1 to 12 years of age, on **Saturday, Dec. 19. 1-5 p.m.** We'll provide an afternoon of crafts, games, snacks, and more crafts! Cost is \$10.00 per child, up to a maximum of \$30.00 per family. *(That's pretty cheap childcare at \$2.50 an hour!)* Preregistration is required; walk-ins or late registrations will not be accepted in order to provide adequate staffing based upon Safe Environment requirements. Nursery registrations (ages 1-4) are limited so don't delay in signing up. Registrations forms are available at the Community Center front desk. And, if you would like to help, we could really use an extra pair of SEP cleared adult and/or teen hands. Please call Deborah for more information. We must have at least 20 families signed up to make this event a go!



REMINDER: There are **NO FAITH FORMATION CLASSES** Sunday, Dec. 20 or Sunday, Dec. 27 to enjoy the Christmas Holiday! **Classes resume on Sunday, Jan. 3, 2016.**

Congratulations to Faith Formation Commission parent representative **Tammy Rios and husband, Edward**, on the recent arrival of daughter, **Tenley Peyton Rios**, on **Thursday, Nov. 19 at 1:10 p.m.** Tenley weighed in at 8 lbs., 9 oz. and was 19 1/4" long. Tenley joins sister, Tatum, and brother, Tosh.



PreK 3 Family Sessions are THIS SUNDAY, Dec. 13 in the dining room, so parents plan on joining your child during their normal Faith Formation class for a great hands-on, faith-filled experience! *Again, these sessions are not associated with our afternoon sacramental preparation meetings.*

This is the last Family Session for the first half of the Faith Formation year. Family Sessions resume in late January 2016. If you need a schedule for 2016, please check out the Children's page on the Holy Spirit website or contact Deborah Garrison for a hard copy.

Parents: An early heads-up—The Teaching Masses for Grades K through 6th Grade are scheduled for Sunday, Jan. 10, 2016, for both sessions! Mark your calendars!



*Breakfast with
St. Nicholas*

**Sunday,
December 13
8:30-11:30 a.m.**

Join us **THIS SUNDAY** for our annual Children's Christmas event, **Breakfast with St. Nicholas!** Enjoy a delicious breakfast, courtesy of the Knights of Columbus, musical performance by the children's and youth Christmas choir and there might even be a visit from St. Nicholas himself! Cost of the breakfast—**PER PERSON**—is a new child's toy, which will be donated to Brighter Tomorrows, one of Dallas County's largest women's shelters. But, if you forget your toy, a monetary donation will be gratefully taken in lieu of a toy. **This event is open to the entire parish...not just Faith Formation.** Grab your grandchildren, nieces and nephews and join us for a wonderful Christmas event!

Adult & Family Ministry



A New Year's Eve Celebration

Thursday, Dec. 31 8:30 p.m.– 12:30 a.m.

Community Center Gym



Cost: \$30 per person
Attire: Holiday Casual

It will be a night of fun with friends and family while enjoying a live jazz band, hors d'oeuvres, beer & wine and champagne toast at midnight

Advanced purchase required, tickets available in the Narthex after each Mass until Dec. 27 or at the community Center during business hours.

For more information contact:

Frances Cormier (972)-217-4246

E-mail-ROYC33@aol.com

Sponsored by ACTS

Community Life

SUNDAY MORNING FOOD & FELLOWSHIP

Today: Breakfast with St. Nick

We will be off for the Christmas Break **Dec. 20 & 27.**
We'll see everyone back on **Jan. 3!**

Simbang Gabi

"Dawn Mass"

Mass & Breakfast: Saturday, Dec. 19

Mass: 6:00 a.m.



Followed by a Filipino Breakfast in the Gym

Learn about Simbang Gabi here:

www2.richmonddiocese.org/obc/Simbang_Gabi_History.pdf

Outreach

A heartfelt Thank You to everyone who donated turkeys and other items to fill the Thanksgiving and Christmas food boxes.

Thank you also to everyone who helped pack food boxes and everyone who helped us distribute the food. We provided Thanksgiving dinners to **65 very grateful families.**

Exercise Class: No class Monday, Dec. 14. Class will resume Wednesday, **Dec. 16 at 9:30 a.m.** This is a good time to work off the stress that often comes with the preparations for the holidays!

Bryan's House: We are raising money for Bryan's House, an organization that ministers to infants and children with special needs including HIV. "Little red socks" can be picked up in



the Narthex. Slip you cash/check donation into the little sock and either put it in the collection basket or drop it off at the front desk in the Community Center. Please give generously. Checks can be made out to: Holy Spirit. The Outreach office will send the contributions to Bryan's House in January.

Save the Date! Jan. 16, 2016 is the Roe Memorial Mass, Rally and March! Watch the bulletin for further details!

SAVE THE DATE

Valentine Celebration!

Saturday, Feb. 13

You and your special Valentine are invited to join us for a fabulous romantic evening in Italy!

Liturgy of the Day ~ 5:30 pm ~

Recommitment of Vows

~ Candlelight Italian Dinner ~

~ Music ~ Dancing ~ Prizes ~

6:45-9:30 p.m. ~ \$40.00 per couple

Marriage Enrichment Evening

Saturday, Dec. 19

Potluck: 6:30 p.m. Program: 7:00-9:00 p.m.

For more information call:

Billy or Davida Callender: (214) 645-8254

or **E-mail:** billy-davida@hotmail.com



NEWCOMERS WANTED TO SHARE THE LAUGHTER