John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the desert of Judea and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!”
Matthew 3:1

WEEK AT A GLANCE

Sunday, 12/4
- CLOW, 9:15 mass
- 3 yr. old, Pre-K, K, Parish Hall 9:15
- Sponsor/Candidate, Parish Hall 4 pm

Monday, 12/5
- RE Grds 1-5, School/Hall 3:30 - 5 pm
- RE Older Sac, Rm B 3:30 - 5 pm

Tuesday, 12/6
- RE Grds 1-5, School/Hall 3:30 - 5 pm
- RE Grds 7-8, Parish Hall 7 - 8:15 pm
- Perpetual Help Devotion, Church 7 pm
- Knights of Columbus, 7 pm

Wednesday, 12/7
- Sewing Ministry, Parish Hall 9 am
- RE Grds 1-5, School/Hall 3:30 - 5 pm

Wednesday, 12/7- cont.
- RE Grds 6, Parish Hall 7 - 8:15 pm
- St VdePaul, 7 pm

Thursday, 12/8
- Masses: 8 am and 7 pm
- Youth Group, Parish Hall 7:30 pm
- Centering Prayer, Hall 9 am
- RCIA, Chapel 7 pm

Friday, 12/9

Saturday, 12/10
- RE Reconciliation, 10am/11am
- Men’s Fellowship, Chapel 7:30 am

Sunday, 12/11
- CLOW, 9:15 mass
- 3 yr. old, Pre-K, K, Parish Hall 9:15
Dear Friends,

I am sure you have been following our beloved Holy Father and some of the controversies surrounding his appointments and writings. I would like to give a shout out to Pope Francis and assure him that Christ the King Parish will be praying for him this advent season. I would like to send him a booklet this Season with our support and prayers.

Pope Francis loves our religious sisters of America and has stood by them. Our parish is fortunate to have many sisters who work, volunteer and attend services. The following story is a testament to his love and support for them. The newly appointed American Cardinal Tobin recounted a story that indicates how well Francis remembers people. He noted that he and Francis — then Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Buenos Aires — first met during a week-long Vatican meeting in 2005. Tobin speaks fluent Spanish so he and Bergoglio were in the same Spanish-language small group in the synod and they sat next to each other. One day during a coffee break Tobin told Bergoglio that while they were all happy with the election of then-Pope Benedict XVI, who had become pope a few months earlier after the death of John Paul II, “in all honesty, Cardinal, you were my mother’s favorite candidate” to be chosen. (Bergoglio was reportedly a strong contender in that 2005 conclave.) Bergoglio was surprised at hearing this. “How does your mother know me?” he asked. Tobin explained: “Well, she read in the newspaper that you pick up after yourself, you cook your food, and you drive a modest car. And frankly, she’s had it up to here with princes of the church!”

Bergoglio laughed, but never forgot. Five years later when Benedict chose Tobin to take a job in the Roman Curia, the papal bureaucracy, Tobin was surprised to receive a brief note from Bergoglio in Argentina telling him he was praying for him and adding, “I remember our conversations and I remember your mother’s good taste.” Three years later, in 2012, Tobin was effectively exiled from Rome and sent to Indianapolis because he disagreed with what proved to be a disastrously unpopular Vatican investigation of the American nuns over doctrinal orthodoxy. A few months after that, Benedict resigned and Francis was elected, and he let it be known that he did not like how Tobin had been treated. And now he is making Tobin a cardinal. (story from NCR)

Recently four conservative cardinals made a rare public challenge to Pope Francis over some of his teachings in a major document on the family, accusing him of sowing confusion on important moral issues. The cardinals — two Germans, an Italian and an American (Burke) — said they had gone public with their letter to the pope because he had not responded. At issue are some of the teachings in a 260-page treatise called “Amoris Laetitia” (The Joy of Love), a cornerstone document of Francis’ attempt to make the Church more inclusive and less condemning. In the document, issued in April, he called for a church that was less strict and more compassionate toward any “imperfect” members, such as those who divorced and remarried, saying “no one can be condemned forever.”

Under church law they cannot receive Communion unless they abstain from sex with their new partner, because their first marriage is still valid in the eyes of the church and therefore they are seen as living in a state of sin. In the document, the pope appeared to side with theologians and bishops who had proposed an “internal forum” in which a priest or bishop decides jointly with the individual on a case-by-case basis if he or she can be fully reintegrated and receive Communion.

The pope has clashed before with conservatives who worry he is weakening Roman Catholic rules on moral issues such as homosexuality and divorce while focusing on social problems such as climate change and economic inequality. Nobody is saved by law or doctrine. The rich young man learned that lesson from his encounter with Jesus. I understand the need for clarity. What inspires me is the willingness of our Chief Shepherd to emphasize the need for pastoral approach in every situation. If only those rigid on doctrine and law also exhibit the heart in difficult life situations as Jesus did when dealing with so many. “He eats and drinks with tax collectors and sinners,” was the rebuke he was given by the Magisterium of his day. I don’t want to get in to discussion on who is right or wrong, but I know when it comes to Jesus-like attitude, Pope Francis gets an A plus and more.

Paulson

Second Sunday of Advent

December 4, 2016
First Reading: Isaiah 11:1-10

The prophet Isaiah lived 750 years before Christ. Despite the political unrest of that period, he looks forward to a kingdom so wonderful that even nature is at peace. This perfect world would be ruled by a descendent of King David. (As you listen to this reading, it helps to know that “Jesse” is the name of David’s father.)

Second Reading: Romans 15:4-9

In the early days of the Church, some of the Jewish people who became Christians continued to practice their Jewish traditions. Many of them were members of the Church in Rome, along with others who were Gentiles. They sometimes found it hard to get along. As Paul nears the end of this letter to them, he encourages them to live in harmony by drawing upon the Scriptures they had in common - what we have called the “Old Testament.”
**Hospitality Raffle!** Our hospitality committee will be selling raffle tickets next weekend to win *The Sugar Plum Tree*; a 4 ft, faux Christmas tree, decorated with candy, gingerbread cookies and ornaments! It has lights, a lighted star tree topper and tree skirt! Tickets will be 2 for $5.00 and all proceeds will go to the CTK St. Vincent de Paul Society. The drawing will be on Sunday, Dec. 11 around 2 pm. Winner will be notified after the drawing. Good luck!

Everyone is invited to join in the celebration of a **Filipino tradition** called **Simbang Gabi**, nine days of consecutive masses, in preparation for the birth of Jesus. At Christ the King, mass on Dec. 15th will be held in the gym at 6:30 pm, then from Dec. 16th to the 23rd, mass will be in church. Light refreshments will follow after every mass, and the last evening mass will be followed by dinner in the parish hall. Simbang Gabi is being sponsored by the Filipino Society of Christ the King. For more information, please contact Rudy Bautista at 925-372-6227 or Imelda Santos at 925-825-2317.

Last chance to buy your **Christmas Wreath**. Scouts will be outside of church selling fresh **Oregon Christmas wreaths**. Be sure to support the local Scouts while adornning your home for the holidays.

**CTK Auction - Online Bidding Starts December 5th!** To help you with your Christmas shopping, we will be launching two rounds of online bidding before the holidays. The 1st round starts on Monday, December 5th. Give your loved ones (or yourself) the gift of wine tours, date nights, a unique puppet theater, a Garmin Vivo, music classes … and much more! Visit the school’s website (www.ctkschool.org) and follow the link to the auction page. Tickets for the auction itself - a **Black & White Gala** on Saturday, February 11th - are also available.

**Save the Dates: Parish Advent Reconciliation Services** - Saturday, December 17 at 3:30 pm and Monday, December 19 at 7:30 pm. Make plans to join us for one of these reconciliation services.

Help support **De La Salle Academy’s book fair**. December 7th and 8th from 5:30 pm to 7:00 pm. “A book is a present you can open again and again.” De La Salle Academy, 1380 Galaxy Way, Ste A, Concord. Call 288-8200 for more information.

**Concern America craft sale** this weekend. Beautiful handmade craft items from El Salvador, Guatemala, Mexico and Bangladesh are for sale this weekend. By your purchase of these gift items, you support the work of Concern America and help to provide a fair and just wage for many materially poor families. We invite you to think about honoring your family and friends in a very special way by choosing gifts with meaning and purpose. Concern America is an international development organization based in Santa Ana, CA. For more info: concernamerica.org.

**Auction, Auction!** CTK Altar Society is holding an **auction for a quilt** for the Christmas holidays. Starting bid is $200.00. The quilt will be on display until 12/23/16. Proceeds support CTK needs. Quilt was beautifully made by Dr. Bev Spurs, CTK parishioner.

**Concern America**

If you would like to help our **environment committee** decorate our church for Christmas, including flowers and Christmas trees, please consider donating using our **Christmas Flower** offering envelopes. You can find the envelopes in your boxed set or in the back of the church.

This weekend is a second collection for **Catholic Education**, which supports our CTK school, youth ministry and religious education. Next weekend, we have a second collection supporting the **retirement fund for religious** (RFR). RFR makes a difference in the lives of roughly 33,000 senior sisters, brothers and religious. Thank you for your continued support.

**Pray for Our Sick**

May you be wrapped up in God’s love, Found deep in His everlasting wings, Carried and kept, safe and cherished. May the healing power of Christ breathe across your being now.

Brad Lubeck, Jack O’Leary

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Scan this QR graphic with your cell phone to connect with our donation site or go online to ctkph.org. Thank you for your support.

Church Support 11/27/16 $21,374 (Plate Collection $16, 411.00 + online giving $4,963) Camp. Human Dev: $6689.00
Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

GOD’S MASTERPIECE

Mary, under her title of the Immaculate Conception, is a familiar, comfortable part of our Roman Catholic life. But the story of the Immaculate Conception was not without moments of contentiousness. Saints of no small stature—Thomas Aquinas and Bernard of Clairvaux (who had great devotion to Mary)—opposed belief in her immaculate conception, offering instead that she was sinless from the time of her birth. They feared that the faithful would think Mary was not in need of God's salvation from sin, as all mortals—including her—are. Some Eastern rite Orthodox Christians still hold that Mary was sinless from the time Gabriel called her Kecharitomenae, "full of grace" or "most-highly favored" in Luke's Annunciation scene.

Blessed Duns Scotus, called the "Doctor of Subtlety," stated that God saved Mary from sin by preserving her, not redeeming her, from it. He called her God's "Masterpiece of redemption." When Pius IX defined the Immaculate Conception in 1854, this is the language he used. Mary, through the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior, had been preserved from sin. "AVE!" "MARAN ATHA!" There is a marvelous, two-fold beauty surrounding all of Mary's feasts. Each of them is a profound meditation on the mystery of salvation in Christ, and each is a wondrous example of our own calling and destiny. The psalm today sings, "All the ends of the earth have seen God's saving power." This is what we celebrate today: that God's saving power works in many ways, and does so throughout the course of time. And so, along with celebrating Mary's salvation to bear the Word in flesh, we celebrate our own salvation. Like Mary, we are not saved through our own merits, but through the merits won by Christ on the cross of Calvary. Like she who was perfectly, abundantly graced, called Kecharitomenae, we are filled with charis, the grace of Christ through the Spirit of our baptismal waters. And so we sing "Ave!" to her, as our Advent cry joins hers while the Church, the Bride, and the Spirit say, "Maran Atha!" "Come, Lord!"