A Note from Fr. Mark

This weekend we begin a new Church year as we welcome the holy and grace-filled season of Advent. Every year, the church gives us this lovely and peaceful winter season. Every year, most of us make the effort to use it as a time of true spiritual preparation for Christmas, but every year we find ourselves overwhelmed by the shopping, decorating, parties and more. Before we know it, Advent is over and Christmas will be a distant memory. This is especially true this year as Thanksgiving came late and the Fourth “week” of Advent is only three days long!

To begin embracing for this beautiful season that flies by so quickly, we might spend some time this week asking ourselves, “How can I possibly keep Advent as Advent is meant to be kept when there is so much to accomplish?” As if the holidays were not enough to prepare for, we are coming to the end of another year and all the “end of year” wrap up activities at work and in other organizations we are associated with are taking place. Additionally, planning is under way for 2020, which fast approaches. How can we possibly embrace the peace and stillness Advent offers us in such a whirlwind of things that “must” be accomplished? How can we be present to the season as the season invites us to be? How do we embrace the present moment and not let upcoming moments rob this season of its beauty?

I suppose the first step in keeping some sense of Advent is simply to recognize the real priority in our lives during the season. Will we be preparing for

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Christmas? Or will we be preparing for Christ? Preparing for Christ gives us a different focus than the world offers us in preparing for secular Christmas. A spiritual focus can put all the hustle of the season in proper context and place our preparations in the service of what is truly important. The demands of preparing for Christmas will not go away. The trappings of the holiday that take so much of our time, energy, thought and resources during Advent will never bring us the peace, joy and hope Advent promises. However, our relationship with Christ can and will. It is always in relationship that deepest meaning is found. Be attentive to your relationship with Christ in a deliberate way this Advent season. Through the practice of personal prayer, the reading of Scripture, attendance at Mass, celebrating our Communal Reconciliation Service, and keeping other spiritual practices you will find the season more peaceful and your celebration of Christmas deepened.

**Prayer for Advent**

*God of All Creation, send Your spirit upon us as we prepare for Christmas.*

*Keep us mindful that we are about to celebrate your coming among us in the person of Jesus.*

*May we be more aware of the ways You come to us in our daily lives.*

*Strengthen our relationship with You and with each other.*

*May we be grateful in these busy days for the blessings we have received,*

*and for Your presence with us in each Advent moment.*

*Amen.*

Have a blessed week. Let us keep each other in prayer. - Fr. Mark

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**Advent Reconciliation**

Advent is a wonderful time to celebrate the reconciling love and the healing graces our Lord offers us! Please join us at St. Augustine Church for:

**Youth & Family Communal Service**

Wednesday, December 11 at 7:00 PM

**Adult Communal Service**

Thursday, December 19 at 7:00 PM
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mass Intentions</th>
<th>Calendar of Events</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| **SUNDAY** December 1 | 8:00 AM
10:00 AM
12:00 PM
Fred & Virginia Brandt
Shaji Manamel (L)
Kwangwon Peter Kim | 9:00 AM
Knights of Columbus Donut Social
Hall |
| **MONDAY** December 2 | 8:00 AM
7:00 PM
Kaden Farro | 8:00 AM
Rosary
St. Vincent de Paul Meeting
Church Rectory |
| **TUESDAY** December 3 | 8:00 AM
10:00 AM
12:00 PM
7:00 PM
Diane Allard | 8:00 AM
Rosary
Infant Toddler Playgroup
Al-Anon Tuesday PM
Church Room 13
Room 6 |
| **WEDNESDAY** December 4 | 8:00 AM
5:30 PM
Rusty Hewitson | 8:00 AM
Rosary
Our Lady of Guadalupe Novena
Church |
| **THURSDAY** December 5 | 8:00 AM
5:30 PM
Gilbert Chavez | 8:00 AM
Rosary
Our Lady of Guadalupe Novena
Church Room 13
Chapel |
| **FRIDAY** December 6 | 8:00 AM
9:00 AM
5:30 PM
6:00 PM
Jerry Lemm | 8:00 AM
Rosary
Eucharistic Adoration
Church Room 8 |
| **SATURDAY** December 7 | 8:00 AM
8:45 AM
3:00 PM
5:30 PM
Irma Hernandez Espina
Irma Reichmuth | 8:00 AM
Rosary
Al-Anon Saturday AM
Reconciliation
Our Lady of Guadalupe Novena
Church Room 8 |
| **SUNDAY** December 8 | 8:00 AM
10:00 AM
12:00 PM
Francis Nnoli
Patrick Morgan
For the People | 8:00 AM
Knights of Columbus Breakfast with Santa
Children's Liturgy of the Word
Our Lady of Guadalupe Novena
Hall Room 17
Church |
| **SUNDAY** December 1 | 9:00 AM
11:00 AM
4:00 PM
6:30 PM
Rosa & Jose Vargas
Ken Stromgren
Rev. Dan Danielson
For the People | 10:00 AM
RCIA Inquiry Gathering
Knights of Columbus Cookie & Donut Social
Vestibule |
| **MONDAY** December 2 | 12:10 PM
Gina Ruocco | 11:30 AM
Rosary & Angelus
Chapel |
| **TUESDAY** December 3 | 11:30 AM
12:45 AM
7:00 PM
7:15 PM
Cheryl Gray | 11:30 AM
Rosary & Angelus
Chapel |
| **WEDNESDAY** December 4 | 12:10 PM
Benjamin & Bibit Angeles | 11:30 AM
Rosary & Angelus
Chapel |
| **THURSDAY** December 5 | 12:10 PM
11:30 AM
7:00 PM
Brian J. Vargas | 11:30 AM
Rosary & Angelus
Chapel Room B |
| **FRIDAY** December 6 | 12:10 PM
12:00 AM
10:00 AM
Anthony Castillo | 11:30 AM
Rosary & Angelus
Chapel |
| **SATURDAY** December 7 | **SUNDAY** December 8 | 9:00 AM
11:00 AM
4:00 PM
6:30 PM
Evelyn Gan (L)
Ilumina B. Ramirez
Arockia Family (L)
Rafael Avalos | 8:00 AM
Christmas Nativity Display
Children's Liturgy of the Word
RCIA Inquiry Gathering
Chapel Room A |
Scripture Readings
December 1
Isaiah 2:1-5
Romans 13:11-14
Matthew 24:37-44

Advent Daily Reflection Books
Advent Daily Reflection Books are available for only $1 each in the vestibule after all masses this weekend. These Little Blue Books provide an excellent way to spend a few minutes in prayer and reflection each day during Advent and the Christmas season. Books are available in English and Spanish, and large print in English.

Our Lady of Guadalupe
The Hispanic Ministry invites you to celebrate an important day honoring Our Lady of Guadalupe! Celebrations on December 12:

- 6:00AM: Serenade to Our Lady of Guadalupe
  St. Augustine Church
- 6:00PM: Bilingual Mass with Mariachi
  St. Elizabeth Seton
- 7:00PM - 8:30PM: Light refreshments at John Paul II Activity Center

Detention Ministry Toy Drive
The Catholic Detention Ministry is collecting toys for the children of parents incarcerated at Santa Rita Jail. The toys are for children ages 0-12 and need to be NEW and UNWRAPPED. There will be bins in the vestibules of both churches. The bins will be picked up on Wednesday, December 18 (last day for donations) and brought to the jail. The children will be getting the toys the weekend of December 21 and 22. For more information, please contact Matt Gray at (925) 202-5425. Thank you for your generosity.

Concern America Fair Trade Handicraft Sale
December 7 & 8 After All Masses
Support Fair Trade by purchasing handicrafts at the Concern America Sale following all Masses on December 7-8 in the church vestibules. These unique items make great Christmas gifts for friends and family. By purchasing these items, you will be helping disadvantaged workers in developing countries like Guatemala, El Salvador, Mexico and Bangladesh earn a fair price for their labor.

Concern America is an international development and refugee aid organization that assists impoverished communities and refugees in developing countries to improve their living conditions, in part by supporting cooperatives that produce handmade crafts. For more information about Concern America, visit www.concernamerica.org.
Sponsored by the Social Justice Committee.

Christmas Nativity Displays
St Elizabeth Seton Chapel
Sunday, December 8, 9:00 AM to 8:00 PM
Participate and celebrate in the wonder of Jesus' birth started by St Francis of Assisi. Share your family traditions by bringing your Nativities Sets - simple or unique. Set up will be Saturday, December 7 from 1:00 PM to 6:00 PM. Please contact Nancy Navarini before December 3 at (925) 640-6334 or na.navarini@gmail.com. Please pick up your nativity set by Sunday night from 8:00 PM to 9:00 PM.
Sponsored by the Italian Catholic Federation

Keep Christ in Christmas Poster Contest
The Knights of Columbus is having its annual Keep Christ in Christmas Poster Contest. There are two divisions Age 5-7 (Grades K-2) and Age 8-10 (Grades 3-5). Entry forms are available in the Faith Formation Office and on the website.

Entries are to be returned there by December 4. Winners will be on display at Breakfast with Santa on December 8 and will be submitted for judging state wide afterwards. Cash prizes will be awarded for the top three winners in each division.

PRAYERS FOR THE SICK

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dorene Paradiso</th>
<th>Evie Graziadei</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elsa Elizabeth Ryan</td>
<td>Maria Theresa Matias</td>
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<td>J. Daniel Carleton</td>
<td>Cris Annen</td>
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<td>Agnes Fuentes</td>
<td>Tracy Hart</td>
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<td>Lydia Fuentes</td>
<td>Hileo Pavia</td>
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<td>Antero Portela</td>
<td>Octavio Martinez</td>
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<td>Elena Whitworth</td>
<td>Kaden Koopmann</td>
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Attention Elementary Faith Formation Parents!!

Beginning in Advent, on the third Sunday of each month, the 4:00 PM Mass is going to be a “Children’s Liturgy”. Not only will the Children’s Choir be singing as usual, but now children will be the lectors, bringing up the gifts, and helping with greeting and ushering. The children will also be hearing homilies directed towards them.

But for this to work we need you and your children to help! To participate, your child must be registered in the Faith Formation Program. If you are interested in your child participating, please contact Kathy Works, Coordinator of Elementary Faith Formation & Sacrament Preparation at (925) 474-2773 or kworks@catholicsofpleasanton.org. The Mass is the source and summit of our Faith. What a wonderful way to make Liturgy come to life for the youngest of our parish!

Simbang Gabi
December 21, 6:00 AM
St. Augustine Church

The Filipino Community invites you to celebrate SIMBANG GABI or Mass at Dawn as we watch, wait and look forward to the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ. We’ll have fellowship and breakfast at the Parish Hall following the Mass.

Come join us and bring a friend to the Simbang Gabi Choir Rehearsal on December 9 and 16, 7:00 PM at Augustine Church.

WINGS Advent Retreat
December 2 at 7:00 PM

All women are invited to an Advent Retreat hosted by CCOP’s WINGS (Women in God’s Spirit) on Monday, December 2 at 7:00 PM. Margaret Riley, Faith Formation Director at St. Charles Parish, will present this evening of reflection. WINGS meets on the first and third Mondays from 7:00 PM to 9 PM in the Chapel at St. Elizabeth Seton Church. Aggie Burke, scripture scholar and teacher, will speak at the WINGS meeting on Monday, December 16. No registration is necessary. Just drop in. For additional information, call Sandra Ryan at (925) 487-3289.

THE GIVING TREE

WISH LIST SPECIALTY ITEMS

Take a look at the items on the parish website homepage and consider selecting an item that adopted family members have on their wish lists. Deliver the purchased (or very gently used) item to the Rectory garage during the posted collection hours. It will be matched to someone who has requested that item, and has not received it. Deadline is Saturday, December 7.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

We need volunteers Sunday, December 8th to help us pack-up and send off gifts for the 400 families CCOP serves!

If you are interested in helping with any of these activities, please contact Roxanne Rasmussen at roxanneras@gmail.com.

Sunday December 8: 9:00 AM - Noon
St. Augustine Hall

The Knights of Columbus are hosting Breakfast With Santa! Get into the Christmas Spirit and enjoy a pancake breakfast and family fun!

Pictures With Santa: 9:30AM - Noon

Family Fun: Keep Christ in Christmas Crafts and fun activities

Please help spread Joy and The Spirit of the Season by bringing a new unwrapped toy to donate to The Santa Rita Jail Ministry.
Presented by the CCOP Music Ministry, featuring the Adult Choir, Teen Choir, Children’s Choir, and Cantors

WHERE:  St. Elizabeth Seton Church
        4001 Stoneridge Drive, Pleasanton
DATE:    Friday, December 13
TIME:    7:30 PM

A free-will offering will be collected.
www.catholicsofpleasanton.org