

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish-Shrine

Second Sunday of Advent

Sunday, December 4th, 2016



The Italian National Parish of the Archdiocese of Chicago
Served by The Missionaries of Saint Charles – Scalabrinians

1101 N 23rd Ave - Melrose Park - IL - 60160

P (708) 344 4140 — F (708) 344 0902

Staff

Pastor

-Fr. Miguel Alvarez, C.S.

Associate Pastors

-Fr. Augusto Feccia, C.S.
-Fr. Juan F. Aguiar C.S.

Parish Deacons

-John Battisto
-Giulio Camerini
-Jose Ramon Arenas

Secretaries

- Nancy Díaz
- Daniel Michel

Office Hours

Sunday

-8:00am—3:00pm

Tuesday- Friday

-8:30am—8:30pm

Saturday

-8:30am — 1:00pm
-2:00pm—5:30pm

Monday

- We're Closed

Sunday Mass Schedule

5:30pm - Sat. Vigil Mass
7:45am - English
9:00am - Español
10:30am - Italiano
12:00pm - English
1:30pm - Español
5:00pm - Español

Weekly Mass Schedule

English

-Monday - Saturday at 7:45am

Español

-Martes y Jueves a las 6:30pm

Italiano

-Sotto richiesta



**THE SCALABRINIAN MISSIONARIES
AT MOUNT CARMEL SINCE 1905**



Our Lady of Mt Carmel, is served
by the Congregation of the Missionaries of St.
Charles – Scalabrinians – .

We are an community of Catholic religious
serving migrants and refugees of different cultures,
religions and ethnicities in 32 countries.

The Congregation was founded in Italy
on November 28, 1887,
by Blessed John Baptist Scalabrin (1839-1905),
bishop of Piacenza (Italy).

Our missionary focus is to be migrants
with the migrants and to be in mission
with people on the move,
with a special priority for the poorest
And neediest migrants.

**OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL
-MISSION STATEMENT-**

We are a faith community bound by the Grace of God the Father who adopted us all as beloved children through Baptism. We journey as brothers and sisters inspired in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, nourished with the Eucharist and strengthened by the love of the Holy Spirit.

Encouraged in the practice of our Catholic Tradition, we experience and honor the maternal protection of Our Lady of Mount Carmel while joyfully celebrating the religious practices of our ancestors in Faith. Heartened by the zealous ministry of the Missionaries of St. Charles (Scalabrinians), we strive to create a welcoming space where justice for all and the wellbeing of God's people become the inspiration in our efforts to build God's Kingdom.

+ + +

**NUESTRA SEÑORA DEL MONTE CARMEL
-VISIÓN-**

Somos una comunidad de fe vinculada por la Gracia de Dios Padre, que nos ha adoptado como hijos amados por el Bautismo. Caminamos como hermanos y hermanas inspirados en el Evangelio de Jesucristo, nutridos con la Eucaristía y fortalecidos por el amor del Espíritu Santo.

Alentados en la práctica de nuestra Tradición Católica, experimentamos y honramos a la protección materna de Nuestra Señora del Monte Carmelo, celebrando alegramente las prácticas religiosas de nuestros ancestros en la Fe.

Animados por el celo ministerial de los Misioneros de San Carlos (Scalabrinianos), nos esforzamos por crear un espacio de bienvenida donde la justicia para todos y el bienestar del pueblo de Dios nos inspiran en nuestros esfuerzos para construir el Reino de Dios.

+ + +

Church Services

We encourage all to register at the Parish-Shrine.

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Les invitamos a registrarse en el Santuario Parroquial.

Support Staff

Business Manager

Alexander Sanchez 708.345.3632

Religious Education

Modesta Martinez 708.344.4140

Activities Coordinator

Miguel Aldana 708-345-3632

Music Coordinator

Ann Marie Nabor 708.579.5373

Community Center Site Director

Pablo Cruz 708.345.3632

Sacramental Life

Confessions *Confesiones*

Saturdays—*Sábados*

4:00pm—5:30pm or by appointment/ *o con cita*.

Baptisms *Bautizos*

Come to the parish office. *Pase a la oficina parroquial*.

Weddings *Bodas*

Contact the priest at least six months in advance.

Contactar al sacerdote seis meses antes de la ceremonia

Quinceañera

Contactar a la secretaria cuatro meses antes de la ceremonia.

Presentaciones

Contactar la Secretaría al menos dos semanas antes

Religious Services

Recitation of the Holy Rosary

Mon—Sat at 7:00am

Adoration *Adoración al Stmo. Sacramento*

Wednesdays 6:00pm—8:00pm

Novena & Benediction

Wednesday/Miércoles 7:30pm

Grupo de Oración Carismática

Martes a las 7:00pm

Grupo de Estudio Bíblico

Miércoles a las 7:00pm

Other Services

Gift Shop Hours *Venta de Artículos Religiosos*

During the regular office hours.

Durante las horas de oficina

Community Center *Centro Comunitario*

Social outreach *Servicios a la comunidad* (708) 345 - 3632

Food Pantry *Despensa de comida*

Wednesdays 4:00pm—6:00pm

Religious Education—*Catecismo*

Saturday - *Sábados* 3:30pm — 6:30pm

Sunday - *Domingos* 10:00am—1:00pm

- Mass Included—*Incluye la Misa*

For the Month of

Dec 3rd Sat/Sab

7:00pm Novena a Ntra. Sra de Guadalupe

Dec 8th Thur/Jue

6:00pm English Mass — Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Dec 9th Fri/Vier

6:00pm Presentacion de la Rosas a la Virgen de Guadalupe

Dec 11th Sun/Dom

11:00pm Misa en honor de la Virgen De Guadalupe

Dec 12th Mon/Lun Our Lady of Guadalupe

5:00am Misa en Español

7:00pm Misa de Rosas

Dec 24th Sat/Sab Christmas Eve

5:00pm English Mass with CCD kids

7:30pm Spanish Mass

12:00am English Midnight Mass

Dec 25th Sun/Dom Nativity of the Lord

Regular Sunday Schedule

Dec 26th Mon/ Lun

7:30pm Misa por la Paz

Dec 31st Sat/Sab New Year's Eve

5:30pm Bilingual Mass of Thanksgiving

Jan 1 Sun/Dom

Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God

Regular Sunday Schesule

Wedding Banns

♥ Jose Perez & Nallely Baca...2

♥ Jose Luis Garcia & Veronica Galvez...2

Weekly Offering

November 26 – 27, 2016

Regular Sunday Collection: \$5,584.00

From the Pastor's Desk



Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand! Traditionally the image of John the Baptist comes to us as an invitation to experience conversion. Seen as the forerunner of Jesus John's voice crying out in the desert becomes a trademark for the Advent season; he came to prepare the way for the Messiah, the hopes and long held expectations of Israel are about to become a reality and the Baptist comes announcing to the people the need for repentance. Salvation is at hand but only those truly prepared are to experience it to the full. God's plan of redemption for a fallen humanity cannot happen when human hearts are not ready to face the radiance of the Lord and thus become true children of the light. The voice of John the Baptist becomes a last minute call for those who persist in embracing the deeds of darkness; his ways of proclaiming the need to straighten crooked ways may not be a pleasant announcement for those who had set their security and well being in their wrongful ways of acting rather than relying in the Lord, but it is precisely his conviction that moved Jesus to call him *The greatest of all the prophets...*

As we prepare ourselves to welcome Jesus in our lives during Christmas season, the voice of John the Baptist becomes a channel for the Church to announce the coming of the Word. The incarnation of the Son of God is an event that still requires human hearts to get ready and thus welcome salvation in our lives. We are to remember the importance of aligning our faith with good deeds. John's struggle with the people of his time was precisely their incapacity to understand how important it is to live in manners that fully express the faith professed: *Every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire...* this expression is a very strong one, we are to carefully listen to it and make the best of our efforts to produce good fruits.

As we get ready for Christmas, our hearts longing to experience the fruits of Salvation Jesus brings to humanity, let us hope the voice of John the Baptist becomes a bell that rings and awakens our spirit and our will. May our ways of life fully express total confidence in the Gospel message and hopefully there will be no contradiction between the faith we profess and the way we act,
Adsum,

WORDS OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE TO JUAN DIEGO

"Let not your heart be disturbed. Do not fear that sickness, nor any other sickness or anguish. Am I not here, who is your Mother? Are you not under my protection? Am I not your health? Are you not happily within my fold? What else do you wish? Do not grieve nor be disturbed by anything."



Food Pantry Thanksgiving Collection

We are happy to report that Parishioner Thanksgiving donations for the Food Pantry amounted to \$3,569.00, private donations of \$1,465.00 and \$2,104.00 in envelopes.

Deacon John



AN ADVENT PRAYER

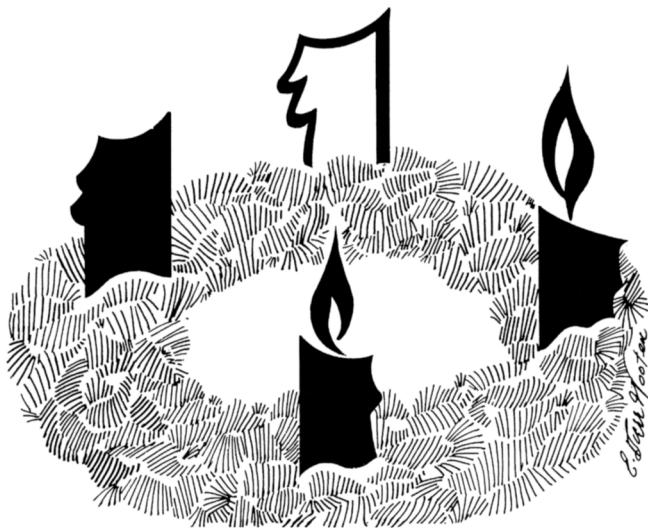
May the God of peace make us completely holy.
May God keep us blameless in spirit, soul and body
for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Forever faithful is the One who calls us—God our Father!
Expectant, let us live in joyful hope
for the revelation of the glory
of our God and Savior, Christ Jesus!
To him be glory forever!
Come, Lord Jesus! Your grace be with us all.

—From *Come, Lord Jesus* by Lucien Deiss, CSSp, copyright 1976, 1981, Lucien Deiss. Published by World Library Publications. p. 127

TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION

Did St. Francis of Assisi invent the Christmas crib? Not exactly, but his devotion to the Incarnation and his love for the poverty of the Christ Child certainly popularized this beloved custom. Long before Francis, it was a custom at the Basilica of St. Mary Major in Rome to enshrine a rich image of Mary, gilded and bejewelled, embracing the child Jesus. This church was founded as a kind of home for the feast of Christmas in the fourth century. In 1223, Francis was ready to celebrate this feast in a new way. In the tiny city of Greccio, he asked friends to prepare a place where they could experience the poverty and suffering embraced by Christ in his birth. It was a living scene: an ox from the barn, an ass from the stable, and peasants standing in for shepherds and kings. The night of the celebration was beautiful, the weather was warm, and people came in crowds, bearing candles and singing hymns that echoed through the forest. Francis himself chanted the Gospel and preached. The custom spread quickly, and by the sixteenth century cribs were seasonal features not only in church, but in the home.

On December 17, the liturgy begins to unfold the Lord's birth before us, and it's the right time to follow this beautiful tradition. In Germany, each night throughout Advent children prepare a bedding for the manger. At bedtime prayer, a child places a single straw in the manger for each act of devotion or virtue performed during the day. If the children are good, then the Christ child will have plenty of soft bedding when he is placed in the manger on Christmas.



PREPARE THE WAY

Saint John the Baptist appears on the scene today as Advent enters its second week. The mysterious consumer of locusts and wild honey, John echoes the words of the prophet Isaiah as he calls for repentance in the face of the nearness of the kingdom of heaven. The rhythms of the Christian life are often confounding. Each year we meet the Baptist and hear his calls for repentance. Each year we see him pointing to the one who is coming after him, the Lord Jesus. Yet each year the words and actions of John the Baptist echo anew in our hearts, because we have fallen into old sinful traps again and again. Advent gives us the opportunity once again to turn away from our sinful ways and embrace the gospel way of life. John the Baptist invites us to prepare the way for the Lord, in whom we place our hope.



Be generous with your church
this Christmas season.

Don't forget to add Our Lady of Mount
Carmel to your gift list.



Mensaje del Párroco



¡Preparen el camino del Señor, enderezan sus senderos! El grito de Juan Bautista rasgando la soledad del desierto se convierte para los creyentes en la plenitud de una promesa largamente esperada: La salvación está a punto de llegar, el Mesías esperado pronto aparecerá y su voz desafía a un pueblo que se niega a la conversión, que rehúsa hacer a un lado sus maneras equivocadas de actuar para poder enfrentar la propuesta de Dios que el Salvador trae consigo. La fuerza con la que el bautista invitaba a la conversión es algo admirable, sobre todo si entendemos que su manera energética y decidida fue precisamente la que lo condujo a la muerte. Juan no desfalleció ni disminuyó su profecía ante los peligros, por el contrario se volvió una voz decidida a proclamar la necesidad de enderezar los senderos pues caminar por ellos cuando están torcidos nos conduce a la perdición.

Mientras nos preparamos como Iglesia para la llegada de Cristo en la historia, se nos invita a escuchar la voz del Bautista que en nuestros días continua siendo actual. El mensaje central de su profecía implica que los creyentes sean capaces de vivir una fe encarnada. No podemos profesar una fe que no se concrete en obras; nuestras acciones deben manifestar la importancia del Evangelio y la claridad de la Salvación que en Cristo Dios ha dejado al alcance de todos los creyentes. Desafortunadamente nos encontramos hoy en día con seguidores de Cristo que bautizados en la Iglesia no se atreven a profesar con valentía los valores del Evangelio. Políticos y líderes religiosos que muchas veces actúan de manera contradictoria al Evangelio, se vuelven obstáculo en la misión evangelizadora de la Iglesia, pero la importancia de hacer coincidir lo que creemos con lo que hacemos tendría que ser también una tarea de cada uno de los bautizados; solamente de esta manera haremos creíble el mensaje Cristiano y validaremos la fuerza del Evangelio.

Que nuestro caminar hacia la navidad se vuelva pues una oportunidad para confrontarnos. Que desde el fondo de los tiempos la voz del Bautista suene retadora en nuestros corazones y que convencidos seamos capaces de poner en marcha el proceso de conversión tan actual que hoy hemos escuchado.
Adsum,

PREPARA EL CAMINO

San Juan Bautista aparece hoy cuando el Adviento comienza su segunda semana. Juan, el misterioso consumidor de saltamontes y miel silvestre, hace eco de las palabras del profeta Isaías en su llamado al arrepentimiento en la cercanía del Reino de los cielos. Los ritmos de la vida cristiana son muchas veces confusos. Todos los años conocemos a Juan Bautista y oímos su llamado al arrepentimiento. Todos los años lo vemos señalando al que vendrá después de él, al Señor Jesús. Sin embargo, cada año las palabras y las acciones de Juan Bautista hacen eco de nuevo en nuestro corazón, porque hemos caído una y otra vez en antiguas trampas pecaminosas. El Adviento nos da otra oportunidad para alejarnos del camino del pecado y aceptar el modo de vida del Evangelio. Juan Bautista nos invita a preparar el camino para el Señor en quien depositamos nuestra esperanza.

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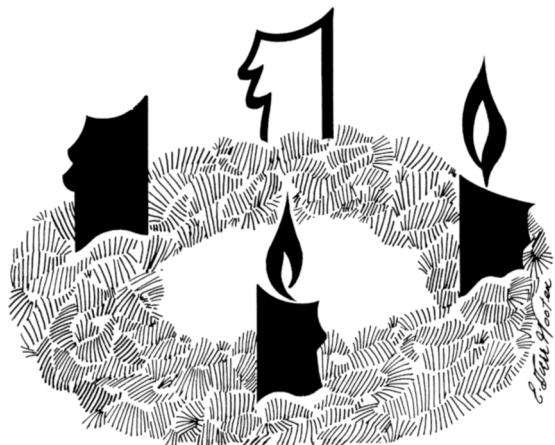


*Así como las aguas colman el mar,
así está lleno el país de la ciencia del Señor.*

— Isaías 11:9

PALABRAS DE NUESTRA SEÑORA A JUAN DIEGO

“No se turbe tu corazón; no temas esa enfermedad, ni ninguna otra enfermedad o angustia. ¿No estoy yo aquí? ¿No soy tu Madre? ¿No estás bajo mi sombra? ¿No soy yo tu salud? ¿No estás por ventura en mi regazo? ¿Qué más has de menester? No te apene ni te inquiete otra cosa”.



TRADICIONES DE NUESTRA FE

El 8 de diciembre, la Iglesia celebra solemnemente la Inmaculada Concepción de María. A la vez, la Madre de Jesucristo es honrada en Venezuela bajo la advocación de Nuestra Señora de Coromoto, en Paraguay como Nuestra Señora de Caacupé, en Panamá como Nuestra Señora de La Antigua y en Nicaragua como Nuestra Señora del Viejo.

Esta última advocación tiene distintas historias que relatan su origen. Hay quienes dicen que pertenecía a un viejo ermitaño que viajaba con unos marineros. En cierto punto la imagen no quiso continuar el viaje y el barco no se movió hasta que se bajó el viejo con ella. Según otro relato, Nuestra Señora del Viejo fue traída a Nicaragua por Francisco de Ahumada, hermano de Teresa de Ávila. Francisco viajaba a América y su santa hermana quiso mandar tres imágenes marianas como regalo a los misioneros religiosos que estaban evangelizando en Guatemala, Perú y Nicaragua. Durante el año 1562, Francisco entregó la imagen de la Purísima a los Franciscanos de Nicaragua en el pueblo de “El Viejo”, por lo cual los nicaragüenses han declarado por años que “El viejo nos trajo a la Conchita”. Hay que saber que el viejo Francisco tenía 41 años de edad cuando pasó por Nicaragua.

CELEBRACIONES EN HONOR DE LA SANTÍSIMA VIRGEN DE GUADALUPE



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- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| Dom. Dic. 3: | 7:00pm Comienzo de la Solemne Novena predica el <i>Padre Jesus Ramirez, c.s.</i> |
| Vier. Dic. 9: | 6:00pm Presentación de las Rosas a La Virgen Morena |
| Dom. Dic 11: | 2:30pm Danza “Indios del Tepeyac” 10:00pm Serenata a la Virgen Santísima con el Mariachi <i>Perla de México</i> . 11:00pm Misa Solemne con Mariachi |
| Lun. 12 Dic: | 12:00am Mañanitas a Ntra. Madre del Cielo con Banda - <i>Al termino de las mañanitas se ofrecerá menudo y café a las personas que gusten pasar al Carmel Hall.</i> 4:00am Mañanitas Festivas a La Virgen Santísima de Guadalupe con Banda 5:00am Misa solemne de Acción de Gracias por todas las Familias Migrantes 6:00am Desayuno con Menudo para todos en el Carmen Hall 7:30pm Santa Misa Bilingüe en Honor de los no-nacidos recordando que la Virgen Stma. de Guadalupe es Madre de Todos. + + + |

**SI DESEAS ORDENAR UN RAMO DE ROSAS
FAVOR DE CONTACTAR A LOS VOLUNTARIOS
DESPUÉS DE LAS MISAS O LLAMA A LA OFICINA
O PASAR A LA OFICINA PARROQUIAL**

No olvides de ser generoso con tu parroquia en esta Navidad.

Agrega a Nuestra Señora del Monte Carmelo a tu lista navideña.



Fr. Feccia's Reflection



L'Avvento: un breve periodo che ci prepara al natale, mentre la natura scivola lentamente nel sonno. Ascoltiamo l'avvertimento di Paolo: «*E' ormai tempo di risvegliarvi dal sonno, perché la nostra salvezza ora è più vicina. La notte è avanzata, il giorno è vicino!*»

A partire dalla pasqua di Gesù, infatti, la vita degli uomini e della società avanza irresistibilmente verso la fine e verso il giudizio. Dobbiamo decidere per lui, e impegnare tutte le nostre energie per «inventare il nostro futuro con Dio». (E. Mounier). Il vangelo di questa domenica ci mette in guardia, insistendo sul fatto che non si è preparati, non ci si preoccupa, si assume un atteggiamento di falsa sicurezza di fronte all'imprevedibile avvento del figlio dell'uomo.

Come ai giorni di Noè, la gente non si rende conto di nulla, bada alle proprie cose. E all'improvviso saranno presi nella loro ibernazione, nella loro non sicurezza dell'essenziale.

L'immagine del Sifnore, paragonato a un ladro che viene nel cuore della notte, esprime in modo significativo la necessità di una continua vigilanza. «Ecco, sto alle porte e busso» Ap. 3,20) Ad ogni ora della storia la chiesa corre il rischio di non udire colui che batte alla porta per risvegliare i cristiani ai richiami dello Spirito.

Oggi più che mai la chiesa e i cristiani devono svolgere un ruolo profetico di contestazione nei confronti di un mondo addormentato, che rischia di perdere la propria anima. Come fare per tenerci svegli, per lasciare dilagare nella nostra vita una corrente di acqua viva che ci sospinga al servizio al servizio generoso del regno? Come fare per non essere colti di soppressa dai giudizio, alla sera della nostra vita, alla sera del mondo?

Dio ci chiama ogni giorno— Questo testo riflette l'atmosfera di febbre attesa del ritorno di Cristo, che regnava al tempo dei primi cristiani. Mentre il mondo si lasciava andare, senza ideali e senza speranze, essi attendevano qualcosa che avrebbe dovuto essere immediato e definitivo. Sentivano quindi il bisogno di tenersi pronti. Ma Dio «viene» ogni giorno; è eterno e nello stesso tempo imprevedibile. Non si tratta però di essere tesi e inquieti come di fronte ad un improvvisa catastrofe, ma al contrario di essere attenti e concentrati: non per paura della morte, ma per non perdere l'occasione di essere per sempre con Dio.



Umanità senza barriere

In questo caso la salvezza significa rompere tutte le barriere, uscire da sé per incontrare gli altri, aprirsi alla rivelazione reciproca, perdonarsi e amarsi come persone, come figli di Dio. Così ha agito con noi il Signore Gesù, rispettando le attese e le possibilità di dialogo di ciascuno: nel passato, accostandosi agli Ebrei come realizzatore della «fedeltà» di Dio e ai pagani come portatore di un amore gratuito; oggi, e sempre, suscitando in ciascuno (persona, popolo, generazione...) una risposta originale che diventi poi ricchezza comune.

Non è quindi un'utopia sperare in un'umanità riconciliata, nonostante le attuali guerre e divisioni, nonostante gli squilibri e le discriminazioni: perché la salvezza definitiva è opera del Signore che viene e che verrà, e chiede ai suoi amici di collaborare perché il suo progetto

divenga sempre più realtà effettiva. Questo significa accettare il messaggio del Battista, che oggi è quello della Chiesa e dei suoi vescovi, degli uomini più lucidi e impegnati che sono i profeti del nostro tempo, e produrre frutti di penitenza e di conversione. Il giudizio che ci attende lo prepariamo con le nostre mani: il fuoco inestinguibile distruggerà tutto ciò che non ha solidità perché non fondato sulla «sapienza che viene dal cielo» (colletta); ed è appunto in questa prospettiva che l'assemblea domanda di saper «valutare con sapienza i beni della terra, nella continua ricerca dei beni del cielo» (orazione dopo la comunione).



Mass Intentions

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3

7:30 am †
5:30pm † Don Cervone by Art & Pam Artman

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 4

7:45am † Anna Rose Orlandino by Son Vito
9:00am †
10:30am For Padre Pio by Barone Family
1:30pm †
5:00pm †

MONDAY, DECEMBER 5

7:30 am †

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 6

7:30 am †

6:30 pm †

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 7

7:30 am †
7:30 pm NOVENA

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8

9:00 am †

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 9

7:30 am †

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 10

7:30 am †

5:30pm † Ralph & Grace Doyle by Children
† Hank Akimori by Family
† Julian Macele by Auntie Rita

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 11

7:45am † Richard Di Domenico by Family

For the Birthday of Carmen Di Domenico by Xochitl & Family

9:00am †

10:30am †

1:30pm †

5:00pm †

11:00pm

ADVENT WEEKDAY

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

ADVENT WEEKDAY

ADVENT WEEKDAY

SAINT AMBROSE

THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

ADVENT WEEKDAY

ADVENT WEEKDAY

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

**PLEASE PRAY FOR OUR BROTHERS AND SISTERS
WHO ARE ILL OR INFIRMED :**

Phyllis Aiuppa

Linda Bandy

Art Conti

Mary Conti

Antonela De Biasio

Nico De Biasio

Mary Donato

Judith Escamilla

Jacob Duda

Kristie Goldi

Linna Goldi

Susan Humpf

Carol Maioni

Vandy Liala

Ethan Maidl

Joseph Pulido

Lauren Rendi

Bobby J. Villa

Luke Westrick

Ann Yench

Angela Williams

Alexandra Vitali

Vicki Parisi

Ken Douglas

Michael Turso

Anna Baffa

Jan Clark

Sara Zonca

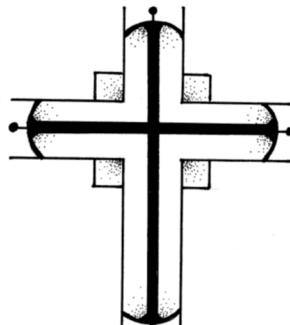
Nancy Oshea

Madeline Vittori

Victor Mejia Jr.

Tony Stellato

Nico Felice



Rest In Peace

† Josefina Nevarez

Reflecting on God's Word

How do you prepare a heart for Christmas? It is not all that different from how we prepare any room for the season. We move some things out and bring others in: lights, candles, and appropriate decorations. We can also apply this to our hearts, both our individual heart and our community heart. Today four voices offer direction.

Jeremiah calls us to remember the God who worked on the house of Israel and Judah, bringing "a just shoot" (Jeremiah 33:15) to flower from the old stump that Israel had become, replacing lifeless leadership with a new branch of the house of David. Justice would flourish for all the people. Jeremiah calls us to trust God's designs that go beyond the surface.

Jesus' words, however, seem to contradict all this, predicting signs that will dismay and perplex, with people dying of fright. What happened to security and justice? But all this frightening activity is not for those waiting on the Lord. Jesus' words are strong: Don't cower; stand erect. Don't let your heart sink into sleep, dive into drink, or be corrupted by carousing. Redemption is in the room, a heartbeat away.

Paul reminds us that we best renovate our hearts by filling them with God's love for others. We do this by how we treat each other. A new year offers time to bring healing to damaged relationships, to reach out to someone we have neglected. And God works along with us, pouring the Holy Spirit into our hearts. —James A. Wallace, C.SS.R.

Reflexionemos sobre la Palabra de Dios

¿Cómo se prepara un corazón para la Navidad? No es tan diferente de como preparamos cualquier habitación del hogar para este tiempo. Quitamos algunas cosas y ponemos otras: luces, velas y decoraciones apropiadas. Eso mismo podemos hacer con nuestro corazón, tanto personalmente como dentro de la comunidad. Hoy hay cuatro voces que nos indican una dirección.

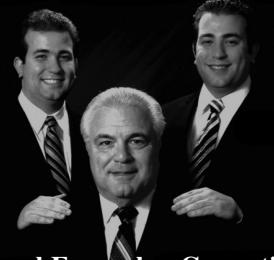
Jeremías nos pide que recordemos al Dios que hizo tanto por la casa de Israel y la casa de Judah, haciendo nacer "un retoño legítimo" (Jeremías 33:15) del viejo tronco en que se había convertido Israel, y remplazando el liderazgo sin vida con una rama de la casa de David. La justicia florecerá para todos. Jeremías nos exhorta a confiar en los designios de Dios, que van más allá de lo que podemos ver.

Las palabras de Jesús, sin embargo, parecen contradecir todo esto, pronosticando señales que consternarán y desconcertarán a las gentes, que se morirán de espanto. ¿Qué pasó con la seguridad y la justicia? Toda esta actividad que asusta no es, sin embargo, para los que aguardan al Señor. Las palabras de Jesús son fuertes: Pongan atención y levanten la cabeza. Estén alertas y no se embriaguen ni se dejen arrastrar por los vicios. La redención está cerca y a nuestro alcance.

Pablo nos recuerda que mejor renovemos nuestro corazón llenándolo del amor de Dios por los demás. La manera de hacer esto es llevándonos bien los unos con los otros. Un año nuevo nos ofrece tiempo, tiempo para sanar las relaciones que se han dañado y para extender nuestras manos a alguien que hemos desatendido. Dios permanece a nuestro lado derramando el Espíritu Santo en nuestros corazones.

—James A. Wallace, C.SS.R.

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