

## SIMBANG GABI (EVENING MASSES) BEGIN DEC 15

The novena of evening Masses before Christmas, called the Simbang Gabi, will begin December 15, at St Elizabeth's Church. The Masses will be at 7:30pm each night. The Simbang Gabi is a traditional Filipino way of preparing for Christmas.

Different priests from the Filipino community as well as priests from the Cathedral will take turns celebrating the Mass each night. Following the Mass there will be fellowship and food in the



CHRISTMAS NOVENA MASSES

church lower level.

All are encouraged, not just Filipinos, to take advantage of these extra Masses during Advent. We also have Mass each day at 7:00 am at St. Elizabeth's and 12 Noon at Westminster Presbyterian Church.

For more information about these Masses, contact Rey or Dolly Policarpio at 419-3734 or 541-7518.

## IMMACULATE CONCEPTION WEDNESDAY DEC 8

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception is a *Holy Day of Obligation*. Masses will be at 7:00 am at St. Elizabeth's and 12 Noon at Westminster. In addition, there will be a 5:00 pm Mass at St. Elizabeth's.

The Solemnity of the Conception of Mary falls nine months before her birth on September 8. A summary of Church teaching on this solemnity may be found in today's Preface which reflects Vatican II's document *Lumen Gentium*. First, Mary was free from sin from the moment she was conceived. Second, Mary, as a

sign of the Church, is the bride of Christ, radiant in beauty (Eph 5: 27). Third, the purity of Mary emanates from the innocence of the Lamb. And fourth, Mary was predestined to be the advocate of grace and the model of sanctity for the People of God. We come to Mass today with the words of the angel Gabriel echoing in our hearts:

**Blessed are we among the people because we have been chosen to bring Him into the world anew today.**

## CHRISTMAS BRUNCH FOR DOWNTOWN POOR

Every year the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, in cooperation with other downtown churches, sponsors a meal for the downtown poor. We will be having the meal this year on Saturday, December 18, at 8:30 am at St. John's Lutheran Church.

We are looking for volunteers to help plan the event

and for volunteers to help on the day of the event. If you would like to help plan, please come to a planning meeting on Tuesday, December 7, at 6:00 pm at St. Elizabeth's Church located at 12th and S Streets. If you would like to help the day of the event, please call Chris Caire (916-395-6350) or Deacon Don DeHaven (916-451-1925).

*THE CHURCH IN THE MODERN WORLD*

## STAYING BALANCED IN ADVENT

*Reverend George Dyer, S.T.D.*

I confess to being a bookstore junkie. On one recent excursion I found a table full of books written by women for women. I didn't think Barnes and Noble would mind so I leafed through them. One of them began with Alexis De Toqueville's observation 150 years ago that we Americans are a people in a hurry. (As the French say: "The more things, change, the more they remain the same"). Mine was hardly a scientific survey but I got the impression that the books were all written to help women bring some balance into their hectic lives.

As I read through those books, I recalled a line my mother had written in the margins of her cookbook. "A woman," she wrote, "is a balancer of lives." She must have been thinking of balancing the demands of two kids, a husband and a job. For many years she managed a large apartment building on Chicago's West Side. She seemed to relish her multiple roles as wife, mother and bread-winner. She aspired to be a "balancer of lives."

I suspect that she had intuited what religious psychologists would only articulate much later. If people are to stay balanced, they need something to believe in and something to belong to. She found them both in the

leisure her Sundays afforded her.

Leisure time is not idle time, those mindless hours we spend watching television. Leisure time is the time we come together with spouses and children, companions and friends. It is a time for relaxing and for strengthening our minds and bodies. It is a time when we are most ourselves, most creative, most human. It is a time for cultivating our cultural and religious life. It is a time for balance. My mother saw Sunday Mass as an essential part of that program.

The Mass meets our needs to believe, to belong and to be creatively human. The Liturgy of the Word tells us that we are children of the earth (and that is good); and that we are children of God (and that is better still). The Liturgy of the Eucharist fashions us into the Body of Christ—a community of love and service. It ends with a command to bring that love and service to the world we inhabit.

That injunction lays out a program for the Advent season we begin today. What better way to prepare for Christ's coming than by love and service? The program demands balance, however; and that demands that we "keep holy the Sabbath."

### MASSES FOR THE WEEK

**MON 12/6/2004** **St. Nicholas**

7:00 am: All Souls  
12:00 noon: All Souls

**TUES 12/7/2004** **St. Ambrose**

7:00 am: All Souls  
12:00 noon: All Souls

**WED 12/8/2004 IMMACULATE CONCEPTION**  
*(Holy Day of Obligation)*

7:00 am: All Souls (St. Elizabeth's)  
12:00 Noon: All Souls (Westminster)  
5:00 pm All Souls (St. Elizabeth's)

**THURS 12/9/2004** **Blessed Juan Diego**

7:00 am: All Souls  
12:00 noon: All Souls

**FRI 12/10/2004** **Advent Weekday**

7:00 am: All Souls  
12:00 noon: All Souls

### TODAY, DECEMBER 5, 2004 AT 3:00 PM CAROLS FROM THE CATHEDRAL

The Cathedral Choir will hold its annual Advent Vesper Service with Lessons and Carols today at 3:00 pm in Westminster Presbyterian Church sanctuary. Jackson Schoos will direct the choir with

Bradley Slocum of Westminster as organist. This is a great opportunity to re-live the quiet and calm of patient waiting during the Advent Season, in contrast to the tinsel and loud noise of the secular world.

