

# HAPPY CHRISTMAS

This is our second Christmas away from home. But we are now more than half way through our 27-month Cathedral restoration project. By this time next year we will be back in the Cathedral, thanking God for a newly restored Mother Church in downtown Sacramento. Meanwhile about 100 men work on the project each day, upgrading the entire building upstairs and downstairs, and restoring the worship space to the beauty of its original Victorian style. Just this week we reached a significant milestone as workers took down the false dome and got ready to rebuild the original interior dome.



On behalf of the priests, deacons and parish staff, I want to thank you for your continued support of the parish while the Cathedral is closed. Your help is especially important to us during this vulnerable time when we are away from our regular place of worship. And thank you for joining us this Christmas as we celebrate the mystery of Jesus birth. Let us rejoice in this feast as we share the news that was announced to the surprised shepherds on that night so long ago: “Do not be afraid; I bring you news of great joy, a joy to be shared with all the people.”

May that joy be part of your family during this holy season.

## CHRISTMAS BREAKFAST KUDOS

The Christmas Breakfast held last Saturday, December 18, at St. John’s Lutheran Church turned out to be another success this year thanks to the 75+ volunteers and donations from local businesses. We served breakfast to approximately 500 downtown poor. The children that came were blessed to receive a special toy from under the Christmas Tree. A special thanks to the following for their donations: Setzer Companies, Mike

Hackard, Grietje Reuter/Robert Rodriguez, Leatherbys—Sunrise location, Leatherbys—Arden location, Senior Gleaners, Coffeeworks, Crystal Dairy, Maple Leaf Meats/John Gillespie, and the Sacramento Food Bank, A special thanks to Russ Hudson for the great job cooking all the food. Watch for information about next year’s event. We will be having it at the newly remodeled Cathedral.

## END OF YEAR CONTRIBUTIONS

Many individuals will make charitable contributions late in the calendar year to take advantage of this year’s tax benefits. Not only are these gifts normally fully tax deductible at their fair market value, but they also allow you to avoid capital gains tax. In order to make a contribution, checks must be

dated and envelopes postmarked on or before December 31, 2004. If you are in a position to make end-of-year contributions, please consider our Cathedral Parish as a beneficiary of your support.

THE CHURCH IN THE MODERN WORLD

## CHRISTMAS

Reverend George Dyer, S.T.D.

As I type these words, I hope that the weather service will promise us a traditional Midwestern Christmas where:

“Tree tops glisten  
And children listen  
To hear the sleigh bells  
In the snow.”

Just outside my window, however, three small birds huddle on a branch, feathers puffed up against a cold drizzle. They suggest the bleakness of the first Christmas when a little family huddled together, far from home, grateful for the warmth of their animal companions. They remind us of American soldiers patrolling the dangerous cities of Iraq and the menacing mountains of Afghanistan, surrounded by frustrated populations and committed terrorists. They remind us how powerless we can feel in spite of our military power.

There was beauty in Bethlehem but it was in the hearts of Mary and Joseph, in their love for one another and for the child that God had given them. Our imaginations have translated that love into the “Silent Night” that little children around the world find so alluring.

Jesus told us: “Unless you become as little children, you will not understand the kingdom of God.” His words, intended to awaken the child in all of us, are

indispensable at this time of the year. For the story we recite each Christmas is very old. We need young hearts and a child’s soaring imagination to make it fresh and new, to make it our own.

Then we will know the magic of that enchanted night when the Son of God came among us—a visitor from another dimension. He came not from a distant star in a far-flung galaxy but from a different realm of being. He crossed the boundaries of the eternal, the horizon of the infinite to join us on this small blue planet as it spins through dark space. “The King of Kings, the Lord of Lords” has made his long promised appearance—as a newborn baby!

We greet him as little children would—with liting imagination and boundless expectation. He has come among us to engage all the enemies of the human—hunger and poverty, hatred, violence and death. We follow him, confident that victory is already his. When we have run the race, we trust that this Savior of ours will lead us through death to eternal life in the Kingdom of his Father.

### A Blessed Christmas to You All!

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 1, 2005**

**NEW YEAR’S DAY MASS  
SOLEMNITY OF MARY, MOTHER OF GOD  
9:00 AM ST. ELIZABETH’S CHURCH**

**ST. FRANCIS HIGH SCHOOL**

#### TEACHING POSITIONS

Several Long-term Substitute Teaching positions are available at St. Francis High School beginning in March 2005. They include 1 full-time English teacher, 1 part-time English teacher, 1 part-time Math teacher (Algebra 1), and Assistant swim coach; season from February 1 through May. Practices M-F in the evenings (dry land conditioning and in the pool). Swim meets are Wednesdays and about 4 weekends. Applications available on Web site at <[www.stfrancishs.org](http://www.stfrancishs.org)>. Send with resume to: Pat Maier, Human Resources, St. Francis High School, 5900 Elvas Avenue, Sacramento, CA 95819 (916-452-3461, ext. 123 Fax: 916-452-6046).

### MASSES FOR THE WEEK

**MON 12/27/2004 St. John the Apostle**

7:00 am: All Souls

12:00 noon:

**TUES 12/28/2004 The Holy Innocents**

7:00 am: All Souls

12:00 noon:

**WED 12/29/2004 St. Thomas Becket**

7:00 am: All Souls

12:00 Noon: All Souls

**THURS 12/30/2004 6th Day Christmas Octave**

7:00 am: All Souls

12:00 noon: Muoi Dang +

**FRI 12/31/2004 7th Day Christmas Octave**

7:00 am: All Souls

12:00 noon: All Souls