

SANTO NINO NOVENA BEGINS WEDNESDAY

The Santo Nino de Cebu novena of Masses in the Cathedral Parish will begin this Wednesday, January 18, and will continue until Saturday, January 28. The Mass each day will be celebrated at 5:10 pm and will be part of the regularly scheduled daily evening Mass. The final Mass on Saturday, January 28, will be at 11:00 am and will be followed by a potluck in the Lower Level of the Cathedral. Families with surnames beginning with a letter from the first half of the alphabet (A-M) are asked to bring a salad or desert. Families with surnames beginning with a letter from



the second half of the alphabet (N-Z) are asked to bring a main dish.

This novena commemorates the miraculous preservation of the statue of the Holy Infant from fire in the City of Cebu in the Philippines during the war between the Spaniards and the natives. All are welcome to participate. The sponsors (hermanos and hermanas) for the event are: Army and William Davis, Fannie and Joe Dahilig, Annie and Je Anne Reyes, and Marilyn and Dan Rivers. For information call Annie Reyes at (916) 419-9515 or Annie Simene at (916) 359-7734.

WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

Like yeast in dough, for 40 years ecumenism has been quietly leavening the life of the churches. It is so much taken for granted that we often do not recognize how different the shape of Christian life is today from 50 years ago and how close the churches have grown. For centuries, hymnody divided Catholics from Protestants. Today we sing one another's hymns. Catholics prize "Amazing Grace" and belt out "How Great Thou Art," and Protestants can be heard chanting "Ubi Caritas" and "Veni, Sancte Spiritus."

Today, among churches splintered by the Reformation, liturgies are looking more and more alike. Since the Second Vatican Council, Catholics have put more emphasis on the Liturgy of the Word. At the same time, the council's revision of the Lectionary helped inspire a parallel text, the Common Lectionary now used by several Protestant denominations. Revisions of Protestant orders of worship reflect a classic Christian focus on the Eucharist; many churches that had Communion services only infrequently now hold them monthly. Albs and stoles, even chasubles, are found in churches that once saw only pulpit gowns.

As the Catholic Church marks the 40th anniversary of Vatican II's "Decree on Ecumenism" (*Unitatis Redintegratio*), we should bear in mind that the Council intended ecumenism to be integral to its understanding of the church. From the floor of the council meeting hall, Pope Paul VI declared that the decree "explained and completed" the "Constitution on the Church." In his encyclical *Ut Unum Sint* (1994), Pope John Paul II made clear the centrality of ecumenism to the postconciliar agenda of church renewal. "Ecumenism," he wrote, "is an organic part of [the church's] life and work, and consequently must pervade all that she is and does" (No. 20). Underscoring the point, where the council wrote of "separated brethren," Pope John Paul II speaks of "our fellow Christians."

As the churches work to achieve the full visible unity for which Christ prayed, Acts 15:28-29 provides the working rule: "It has been decided by the Holy Spirit and ourselves not to impose on you any burdens beyond [the] essentials ..." Unity is necessary only in essentials; in other matters there may be legitimate diversity. "In everything," the council said, "let charity prevail."

In the United States, the Catholic-Orthodox dialogue has made serious progress in recent years on Orthodox recognition of Catholic baptism and on the 1,000-year-old credal difference over the term "filioque," the word in the Catholic version of one of the ancient creeds that proclaims belief that the Holy Spirit "proceeds from the Father and the Son." The U.S. Catholic-Lutheran dialogue prepared the way for the landmark *Catholic-Lutheran Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification* (1999), which addressed perhaps the most fundamental controversy of the Reformation. The dialogue with the Reformed Churches in the United States has made significant progress on the question of the Eucharist; and this year's report of the International Catholic-Mennonite Dialogue has opened the way to more Catholic collaboration with the peace churches and the Anabaptist tradition. In our own diocese Bishop Weigand has participated in pulpit exchanges with a number of denominations. We have an active Ecumenical Commission and a number of leaders from various Christian denominations who were observers at the opening of our Diocesan Synod in October of 2004.

There continue to be setbacks, of course. Pope John Paul II made clear, in a joint message issued in 1996 with George Carey, then Archbishop of Canterbury, that problems should not impede the quest for unity and there has been no change in this position since then.

Like a seed growing unseen, the Holy Spirit has been at work bringing Christians closer together. Discerning eyes can begin to make out the lineaments of the one Church of Christ of which we all are a part. As our differences diminish, it is time to appreciate better the gifts we bring one another. For as the Council wrote, "Catholics must gladly acknowledge and esteem the truly Christian endowments for our common heritage which are to be found" among our fellow Christians. "It is right and salutary to recognize the riches of Christ and virtuous works in the lives of others who are bearing witness to Christ, sometimes even to the shedding of their blood."

2ND ANNUAL WALK FOR LIFE WEST COAST

Mark your calendars for Saturday, January 21, 2006 and join with thousands of pro-lifers for the 2nd annual Walk for Life West Coast in San Francisco. We will again peacefully proclaim our message that abortion is a grave evil and hurts us all. Seven Greyhound buses will be departing from Sacramento area churches for the San Francisco Walk for Life event and we invite you to be on board! Seats are only \$15.00 a piece. Some sponsored seats are available for folks unable to pay, and folks who would like to sponsor are warmly welcome. Priests and Religious are free and we hope many will accompany us. Departure points are listed below with contact person and telephone numbers.

Our Lady of Lourdes	Kathleen DeSantis	364-7991
St. Ignatius Church	Mary Seri	254-4444
St. Rose	Lenore Mullarkey or Sally Fisher	395-9370 780-5305
St. Stephen	Jan England	971-9133
St. Rose of Lima	Carol Schonert	791-1819

LOCAL SERVICES FOR WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY

ALL SERVICES FROM 7:00 PM TO 9:00 PM

- WEDNESDAY JANUARY 18:** St. John Lutheran Church "United Through the Presence of Christ"
17th and L Streets
- THURSDAY JANUARY 19:** Prince of Peace Church "Building Christian Unity with Jesus in Our Midst" 7501 Franklin Blvd.
- FRIDAY, JANUARY 20:** Carmichael Presbyterian Church, "Praying Together in Jesus Name"
5645 Marconi Avenue
- SATURDAY JANUARY 21:** Trinity Episcopal Cathedral
"From the Past to the Future: Forgiveness" 2620 Capitol Ave
- SUNDAY, JANUARY 22:** First United Methodist Church, "God's Presence Among Us: A Call to Peace" 2100 J Street
- MONDAY JANUARY 23:** Christ Community Church
"Mission in Jesus' Name" 5025 Manzanita Avenue, Carmichael
- TUESDAY JANUARY 24:** St. James Armenian Church
"Recognizing and Welcoming God's Presence in the Other" 3240 B Street, Sacramento
- WEDNESDAY JANUARY 25:** Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament
"One in Hope" 1017 11th Street

DIOCESAN SINGLES ADULTS MASS JANUARY 21 AT 5PM

Bishop Weigand will celebrate the Diocesan Single Adult Mass on Saturday, January 21, in the Cathedral at 5:00 pm for all those who are separated, divorced, and widowed. The Mass will be followed by an informal social sponsored by the Catholic Diocese of Sacramento Single Adult Committee. For more information, contact Steve at (916) 455-1912 or John Rieschick at (916) 733-0133 at the Diocesan Pastoral Center.

PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS

Loving God, You speak to us and nourish us through the life of this church community. In the name of Jesus, we ask you to send your spirit to us so that men and women among us, young and old, will respond to your call to service and leadership in the church. We pray, especially, in our day, for those who hear your invitation to be a priest, sister, brother, or deacon. May those who are opening their hearts and minds to your call be encouraged and strengthened through our enthusiasm in your service. Amen.

MASSES FOR THE WEEK

- MON 1/16/2006** **Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday**
12:10 pm: Mary Flores & Family, S.I.
3:00 pm Diocesan Synod Mass
5:30 pm NO MASS
- TUES 1/17/2006** **St. Anthony, abbot**
12:10 pm: Ruben Jimenez & Family, S.I.
5:10 pm James L. McIntosh, S.I.
- WED 1/18/2006** **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**
12:10 pm: Eric Westmark, S.I.
5:10 pm: Caroline Santiago
- THURS 1/19/2006**
12:10 pm: Raul Jimenez & Family, S.I.
5:10 pm: All Souls
- FRI 1/20/2006** **St. Fabian, St. Sebastian, martyrs**
12:10 pm: Remedios A. Ferrer, S.I.