

~ SERVANT LEADER ~

I know these are challenging times for many people. I came across this question and answer which I hope is of some help.

GOD LOVES A CHEERFUL GIVER

We're one of those families who give less than 1% of our income to the church and other charities. We've read what you have to say about stewardship and tithing and really would like to give more. How do you get started when you're barely making ends meet as it is?

You're about to embark on a great adventure! Tithing has a way of changing our perspective on money matters in a way few other things can.

In St. Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians, he provides instruction regarding how the people of Corinth should implement a collection for the needs of the Church. We can learn from these passages.

“And in this matter I give my advice: It is best for you now to complete what you began not only to do but to desire, so that your readiness in desiring it may be matched by your completing it out of what you have.” He writes in 2 Corinthians 8:10-12. “For if the readiness is there, it is acceptable according to what a person has, not according to what he has not.” Contrast this with 2 Corinthians 9:6-8, where he says, “The point is this: anyone who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly and anyone who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each one must do as he has made up his mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that you may always have enough of everything and may provide in abundance for every good work.”

You can see how Paul provides a balance between prudence and generosity. There is no one right answer for all situations. But, generally speaking, I would encourage you to take a two-pronged approach.

On the one hand, increase your charitable giving by an amount that “stretches” you today. This may mean increasing your giving from 1% of your income to 3% immediately. You'll want to keep a full tithe as a goal to be achieved in the near future (one to two years isn't an unreasonable timeframe).

On the other hand, you should combine your increase in giving with a basic review of your spending habits.

Take a hard look at your budget for expenses that can be reduced or eliminated. This review may show misguided priorities (high entertainment or automobile costs, for example) – and may show where you might draw from.

My prayer is that as you work to more effectively integrate your financial priorities with Christian teaching you'll experience the joy of being “a cheerful giver.” God love you!

~ THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT ~

December 13, 2009

Zephaniah 3:14-18a | Philippians 4:4-7 | Luke 3:10-18

The sixth century prophet Zephaniah's cry of trust and hope occurs within the context of his conviction that on some future day the Lord will disperse those whose arrogance and lack of responsibility is poisoning the community, and a small remnant of humble faithful servants will be on hand to see the power of God prevail. St. Paul and Zephaniah, though separated by centuries, both hold fast to their hope for a new day when peace will reign. Paul's plea for peace is especially poignant since it is directed to two women leaders of the church in Philippi, Euodia and Syntyche, whose squabbles are affecting the growing community's ability to reflect the unity and peace of Christ.

The passage from Luke is a reminder of just how broad the range is of this Gospel's call to live justly and in peace. John the Baptist addresses not only those who might perceive themselves to be insiders, but others, soldiers and tax-collectors, who seek to ascertain what their responsibilities could possibly be with relation to his ethical exhortations. It is important to note that soldiers and tax-collectors represent the power brokers and sustainers of the Roman Empire in the first century. John's answer is clear and unflinching, and consistent with the message of Jesus throughout the rest of the Gospel: he asks them to right the wrongs that are victimizing the powerless and the poor.

It is appropriate to pause and bring to mind those who are victims of exploitation or marginalization: anyone whose dignity is assailed due to the inequities of a societal system that permits some to have excess while others have no access; anyone who suffers extortion at the hands of pay day loan practices; those members of social action groups targeted for attack and vilification by those threatened by shifts in the status quo; those in a position of power or privilege who use their position for their own ends. Wherever community members come together to express and act on their commitment to combat such injustices, we might well rejoice with Zephaniah and St. Paul.

One fine example of such solidarity is the phenomenon of 583 organizations and almost 7,000 individuals who have declared their willingness to take action to reduce poverty in this country and endorsed Catholic Charities' Campaign to Reduce Poverty in America. On the heels of these endorsements, volunteers across the U.S. have come forward to help teach financial literacy, to offer supportive services to help people escape poverty through employment and stable housing, and to form circles of support to aid families in gaining access to the resources they need for a better life. Perhaps this week we might add our own voices in endorsement of this campaign and demonstrate how Christ's spirit is renewing the face of the world.



PRAYER

As we rejoice in anticipation of the coming of the Savior, may we form ourselves as communities of reconciliation, compassion and justice, we pray to the Lord.

COMMENT

Catholic Charities USA urges parishioners to pray this week for all those whose efforts lighten the burden of exploitation and inequity suffered by those living lives of poverty. Join the Campaign to Reduce Poverty at www.CatholicCharitiesUSA.org. May we rejoice always in the signs of Christ's in-breaking kingdom!

~ CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR'S MASS SCHEDULES ~

CHRISTMAS EVE MASSES

Thursday, December 24

5:00 p.m. - Vigil Mass (Children's Mass)
Most Reverend Francis A. Quinn, Presiding

7:00 p.m. - Mass (Spanish)
Most Reverend William K. Weigand
9:00 p.m. - Mass (English)

11:30 p.m. - Musical Prelude

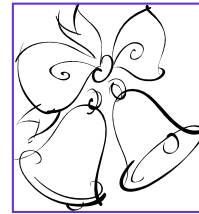
12:00 a.m. - Midnight Mass of Christmas
Most Reverend Jaime Soto, Presiding
Cathedral Choir

SACRAMENT OF PENANCE AND RECONCILIATION

Monday - Friday 11:30 a.m. - 12 noon

Saturday 4:00 - 4:45 p.m.

Christmas Eve 3:00 - 4:30 p.m.



CHRISTMAS DAY MASSES

Friday, December 25

7:30 a.m. - Mass (English)

9:00 a.m. - Mass (English)
Most Reverend William K. Weigand

11:00 a.m. - Mass (English)
Most Reverend Jaime Soto, Presiding
Cathedral Choir

1:00 p.m. Mass (Spanish)

No Evening Mass

NEW YEAR'S DAY MASSES

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

NEW YEAR'S EVE MASS
Thursday, December 31
5:00 p.m. - Vigil Mass



NEW YEAR'S DAY MASSES
Friday, January 1
10:00 am. - Mass (English)
1:00 p.m. - Mass (Spanish)

No Evening Mass

The parking lot across the alley will be available for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. At these and all Cathedral Masses you simply need to have a bulletin with you to show as you exit.

~ LIFE & DIGNITY SUNDAY REGISTRATION NUMBERS ~

Last Sunday approximately **900 parishioners from our Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament Parish** registered for the Catholic Legislative Network. We are very pleased with these results. We thank you for agreeing to participate and we will be praying that the network will be successful in creating public policy in our state that is more caring, respectful of life, and just for all. We received word yesterday that over **12,500** people throughout the diocese signed up for the CLN last weekend. WOW!!!

~ STEWARDSHIP – A WAY OF LIVING ~

The returns from Stewardship Sunday are being collated and soon I expect to have a list of all who signed up for various ministries. Right after Christmas we will contact all of these and provide training opportunities for their chosen ministry or ministries. Thanks to all who have chosen to serve and others are welcome to sign up at any time. The goal is to have as many people as possible involved in the life of the church by use of their Time, Talent, and Treasure. Speaking of Treasure, the budget continues to be a challenge. The Finance Committee is exploring all aspects of spending e.g. making sure envelopes are sent only to those who use them, frugal use of heating and cooling. We have reduced a number of expenses and are looking at what could possibly be reduced further to the bare minimum.

Now the challenge is to raise Income. I'm grateful to those who have responded in Stewardship that they will increase their donations. The collection last Sunday was \$10,470. I'm hopeful it will increase and ask you to pray for the well being of the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament Parish.

~ CATHOLICS COME HOME ~

POWERFUL TV ADS TO AIR ON SACRAMENTO AND CHICO/REDDING STATIONS

Starting on December 18th, the Diocese of Sacramento will be airing thousands of powerful ads on TV in English and Spanish designed by the non-profit charity: *Catholics Come Home*. These will appear on Sacramento stations every day, all day long, for 6 weeks on all stations. This initiative means that many inactive Catholics will be returning home to the Church, and many non-Catholics will be inquiring into our Catholic Faith.



This Advent, as we prepare to strengthen our relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ, we remember our call to share our faith with one another. We encourage each of you to invite those who may not be practicing their faith (or who may have never encountered Christ) to join us for the Holy Season of Christmas. For those who are returning home, our parish will

be offering special Catholics Come Home programs in the New Year. We lovingly invite all those who have fallen away, to come home, to find healing, answers and support. Please visit CatholicsComeHome.org or CatholicosRegresen.org for more information.

~ EAST LAWN CRYPT FOR SALE ~

The owners of a double crypt at the East Lawn Cemetery at 43rd Street and Folsom Blvd. in Sacramento are moving and would like to sell the space to someone. For more information, please contact Fr. Michael Kiernan at 916.733.0254.

~ THE TRUE JOY OF THE SEASON ~

A SPECIAL CHRISTMAS MESSAGE

When we honor Christ as the heart of our Christmas; When we put Him first in all we pursue; When we hold Him up as the season's true reason; for who he really was and what He came to do; When we set aside time for quiet contemplation despite all the hurry, the noise, and the fun; When we remind others by gentle example that's there's more to Christmas than "getting things done"; When we let our spirits be called to renewal in worship and peace at the good news He brings; Then we will know the true joy of the season and we'll truly have life's most valuable things.

PARISH DIRECTORY AT A GLANCE

MINISTRY	LEAD	TELEPHONE
Parish Council	Peter Ruffing	478-1198
Liturgy Committee	Rex Rallanka	Rectory 444-3071
Finance Committee	Robert Ingenito	Rectory 444-3071
Cantor	Lola Krist	Rectory 444-3071
Choir-English	Rex Rallanka	Rectory 444-3071
Choir-Spanish	Jerry Vanoye	Rectory 444-3071
Docents	Denise Fracchia	Rectory 444-3071
Environment Committee	Chris Houlemard	Rectory 444-3071
Eucharistic Adoration	Isabella Cazares	391-1760
Festival of Trees & Lights	Valerie Chun	Rectory 444-3071
Gift Shop	Sister Jenny	444-5364
Hispanic Apostolate	Deacon Raul Leon	Rectory 444-3071
Hospitality Committee	Maria Balaskin	Rectory 444-3071
Knights of Columbus	Fr. Kiernan	Rectory 444-3071
Liturgical Ministries (Lectors, Eucharistic Ministers, Altarservers)	Mike Ognisty	Rectory 444-3071
Marriage Preparation	Steve and Mariana Rose	421-2281
Parish Vocation Committee	Matthew Mlakar	648-3073
Rectory Volunteers & Staff	Fr. Kiernan	Rectory 444-3071
Religious Education & RCIA	Sr. Jenny	444-5364
Social Committee	Dawn Ruffing	Rectory 444-3071
Social Justice Committee	David Clements	646-1800
St. Vincent de Paul Society	Deacon Jorge Usi	Rectory 444-3071
Ushers	Tom Waddock	Rectory 444-3071
Visiting the Sick	Deacon Raul Leon	Rectory 444-3071
Welcome Back Program	Tim Longdon	Rectory 444-3071
Youth Spanish Group	Edgar & Leticia Hilbert	440-6211 or 261-6504

I am grateful to all who serve our parish in these ministries. We need more to help in these areas and new ministries can develop as in God's grace people come forward. May the Holy Spirit lead us and the example of the Blessed Virgin Mary, our Mother, inspire us.

~ CHRISTMAS BASKETS FOR THE POOR ~



The Cathedral Parish will donate Christmas Baskets to the poor this year on Saturday, December 26. We are looking for volunteers to make the baskets, money donations, and turkeys. For information call Deacon Don DeHaven at 916- 451-1925 or leave a message at the Rectory 444-3071.

to traumatized survivors. It is the model program of its kind throughout the nation. If this is the kind of ministry to which you think you might be called, please visit www.sacchaplains.com or call 916-857-1801 for more information.

~ CATHEDRAL YOUTH GROUP ~

The Cathedral Youth Group (English and Spanish young people) meets every other Wednesday evening in the Lower Level from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm. The next meeting will be Wednesday December 16, 2009. For more information, contact Leticia and Edgar Hilbert at 457-1552 or Sister Jenny at 444-5364.

~ HANDEL'S MESSIAH ~

The Academy Chamber Orchestra and Chorus of All Hallows Parish with Ryan Murray conducting will present several performances of Handel's Messiah. A "Sing-Along" performance will be conducted at St. Ignatius Loyola Parish,. 3235 Arden Way, on Wednesday December 16 at 7:30 pm. The main performance will be at All Hallows on December 18 at 8:00 pm. See www.AcademyAtAllHallows.org for more information. Tickets available through www.ticketweb.com.

January 8, 9 & 10, 2010

Mid-State Fairgrounds Auditorium

Paso Robles, California

Central California 13th Annual

Marian Eucharistic Conference



featuring

Bishop Richard Garcia

Diocese of Monterey, California

Sr. Briege McKenna, OSC

St. Clare's Sisters Retreat Ministry

Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC

Marians of the Immaculate Conception

Fr. Tom Sullivan, CPM

Fathers of Mercy

Fr. Pat Martin

Fr. Wayne Dawson

Pastor: St. Rose Church

Emcee David Parkes

Visit our web-site www.cmecc.netfirms.com To register by phone contact Toni Clevenger 805-441-2131 other inquires phone Pat Borba 805.461.5358 or Lynn Stroble 805.239-1597

~ VOLUNTEER CHAPLAIN PROGRAM ~

Sacramento's volunteer community chaplain program responds with law enforcement to homicides, suicides, drowning, and other tragedies, providing profound comfort

CATHEDRAL MASS SCHEDULE

MON 12/14/2009 ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS
Nm 24: 2-7, 15-17a; Mt 21: 23-27
 12:10 pm: Fr. Tom Timmons CSSP, S.I.
 5:10 pm: Sam Nguyen +

TUES 12/15/2009 ADVENT WEEKDAY
Zep 3: 1-2 & 9-13; Mt 21: 28-32
 12:10 pm: George Ponce +
 5:10 pm: Frank/Donna Reschke, S.I.

WED 12/16/2009 ADVENT WEEKDAY
Is 45: b-8, 18, 21b-25; Lk 7: 18b-23
 12:10 pm: Ruben E. Gutierrez +
 5:10 pm: In Thanksgiving for St. Jude

THU 12/17/2009 LATE ADVENT WEEKDAY
Gn 49: 2, 8-10; Mt 1: 1-17
 12:10 pm: Mary Rivas, S.I.
 5:10 pm: Justina Vera Barroga +

FRI 12/18/2009 LATE ADVENT WEEKDAY
Jer 23: 5-8; Mt 1: 18-25
 12:10 pm: Ruben E. Gutierrez, S.I.
NO EVENING MASS ON FRIDAYS

ADORATION OF THE BLESSED SACRAMENT
 WED & THUR 12:40PM-4:45PM FRI 12:40PM-3:45PM
 TO SIGN UP CALL ISABELLA CAZARES 391-1760 OR 833-1948,
 OR E-MAIL BECAZ96@SBCGLOBAL.NET

CATHEDRAL TOURS EVERY SUNDAY
AFTER 9:00 AM AND 11 AM MASSES