

Living the Truth, our Advent Goal

The First Reading speaks of the extravagant preparations God makes for the restoration of His people. (Israel having been clothed in mourning will now be clothed in splendor, with the cloak of justice and a mitre on her head making Jerusalem a holy, priestly city. The children of Israel will return to her from all the farthest corners of the earth.) Even now He makes those same preparations so that we can turn our hearts to Him. During this Advent season, we are called to return to God from the exile we have created for ourselves through lives of selfishness and sin. ● The Responsorial continues this theme of restoration, speaking of the joy of returning from exile to a land of fertility. Leaving that self-created exile of selfishness and sin gives us the joy of embracing God, and responding to Him, our deepest need. Surrendering to His love will transform the desert of our hearts and give us the power of self-discipline, making our hearts a land overflowing with fertility. ● The Second Reading, St. Paul wrote shortly after facing death. Now he knows what is truly important and he prays that we may discern aright, growing in love while seeking and finding the truth. St. Paul prays that we do so while there is still time and discover what is pure and blameless. This is a goal of the Advent season: to seek the truth with all our strength, to purify our hearts so that we can live the truth and be found blameless at the coming of the Lord (on Christmas day and at the end of time). ● The Gospel calls us to prepare the way for the Lord: to turn away from sin so that we can embrace the salvation God offers. We cannot hope to embrace the Babe of Bethlehem if we do not turn away from sin.

Prayer of the Week

Let us pray in Advent time for the coming Savior to teach us wisdom ● Father in heaven, the day draws near when the glory of your Son will make radiant the night of a waiting world. May the lure of greed not impede us from the joy which moves the hearts of those who seek him. May the darkness not blind us to the vision of wisdom which fills the minds of those who find him. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

Faith First

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Two powerful effects of baptism are forgiveness of sin and the adoption of the baptized into God's family. Further, the Holy Spirit given in the sacraments of baptism and confirmation and the reception of the Lord in the Eucharist make us holy. However, the new life we receive through the sacraments of initiation does not take away our weakened human nature. Our inclination to sin (traditionally termed *concupiscence*) remains, requiring a lifelong struggle to conversion. ● A major help in this struggle to heed Jesus' command to repent and to believe in the gospel is the sacrament of conversion, also termed penance, confession, forgiveness, and reconciliation. ● We call it the *sacrament of conversion* because it makes sacramentally present Jesus' call to repent. This, in fact, is the first step for sinners to take in returning to the loving Father who awaits with open arms. This sacrament calls Catholics as individuals and as a community to turn to God's infinite mercy and walk the path of renewal. ● We call it the *sacrament of penance* to emphasize that a life of conversion involves doing penance and making satisfaction for sins we have committed. ● We call it the *sacrament of confession* because an essential element of the sacrament is to tell our sins to the priest. Through this sacrament we also "confess," that is, acknowledge and praise God for the bounteous mercy God extends to us. ● We call it the *sacrament of forgiveness* to underscore that through the priest's absolution God imparts pardon and peace. ● Finally, we call it the *sacrament of reconciliation* because God's love empowers us to become reconciled, to become one again, with those we have harmed through our sins.

Advent Penance Service

This Tuesday, December 11 at 7:00 pm

An Act of Contrition

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy.

In Memoriam

Let us pray for all those who have died and are in need of prayer. May they enjoy light, happiness and peace.

Please Pray for the Sick

Bishop Francis Quinn, Rick Cwynar, Kang Simon Lee, Diana Zuniga, Suzie Riehl, Laurel Sunderman, Isabel Harper, Rouzbeh Daylami, Howard Huston, Mark Zane, Richard Honey, Josephine Davila, Dale Wooldridge, Donald Anderson, Teresa Yeung, Nancy McGarry, Vivian Stolp, Rita Doherty, Patrick Valenzuela, Cheryl Halm Lincoln, Michael Fletcher, Grayson Kemp, Gary Pepe, William Daniel Reed, Stephanie Merenda, Victoria Generoso, Jim Collins, Grace Grant, Robert Arkebauer, Libby Basurto, Dena Foster-Cook, Marie Schumacher, Ralph Goodall, Josephine Haddock, G.R. Gurley, Darren Stewart, Marge Mugartegui, Angel Curiel, Phillip Worth, Sonia Damiano, Barbara Cramer, Ava Grace Arnold, Karen Amnon, Mary Terese Henriksen, Pamela Saenz, Stan Boyd, David Hunn, Addison Parker, Brett Stover, Norma Clark, Robert Clark, Jr.

Meetings & Events

Advent Giving Tree

Our parish Giving Tree has been placed next to the Our Lady of Grace Chapel, near the piano. Tags hanging on the Tree will benefit the children at St. Francis Terrace, those served by the Sacramento Catholic Diocesan HIV/AIDS Ministry, low-income seniors at Arden Villa Senior Citizens' Center, and people served by the Human Trafficking Medical Home. ● Your generosity will be greatly appreciated.

Retirement Fund for Religious: Today!

Do you remember the sisters, brothers, or religious order priests who made a positive difference in your life? Today many are elderly and need assistance. Their religious communities struggle to meet retirement needs while continuing to serve the People of God. Special envelopes are available in the church vestibule. Please give generously.

The 45th Annual Holiday Home Tour

Thank you to all families at Sacred Heart Parish School who worked very hard to make the Holiday Home Tour a smashing success. Thank you as well to all of you who purchased tickets, shopped and had lunch in our café. We are grateful to you for your support.

Parish School Now Accepting Applications

The School is now accepting applications for the 2019-2020 school year. Applicants for Transitional Kindergarten must be 4 years old by September 1, 2019 and applicants for Kindergarten must be 5 years old by September 1. We will also be accepting applications for 1st- 6th grades. ● For more information, please contact the Parish School at 916-456-1576.

Altar Society Christmas Flowers

● Please consider a donation *in memory of* or *in honor of* a loved one to help us beautify the church sanctuary with poinsettias for Christmas. Checks should be made payable to *Sacred Heart Altar Society*. Please include your name, telephone number, and the name(s) of those being remembered or honored. Place in an envelope marked "Attention: Altar Society" and drop in the collection basket or mail to Claire Hyde at 5500 Spillman Ave., Sacramento 95819. Please return donations by December 18. ● Thank you.

● Judith Tousey is providing the flowers to beautify the Blessed Sacrament Altar during the weeks of Advent, and Linda Rutherford and Mary Domyancic are caring for the flowers. Our thanks to these ladies for helping with this important ministry.

Butte County Fire Collection: Thank You!

We collected over \$9,000 for relief efforts. ● If you missed last week's special collection you can still contribute and donate online -- Visit www.scd.org/donate and choose the Fire Assistance Fund.

Retreat for Women

Join the women of Sacred Heart signing up for the annual retreat at Christ the King Retreat Center on the weekend of January 11-13, 2019. Ask someone who has made the retreat and they will tell you they have never been more at peace with God and the world. A retreat once a year is a vital necessity these days. Consider giving the gift of a retreat this Christmas! ● For more information please call Kim Paquette at 916-479-1736. Sign-up forms are also available in the church vestibule. You may register on-line at www.christthekingretreatcenter.org.

Youth Group Update

Due to the Christmas break at school, the Youth Group will be meeting only once in December. That meeting will be our Third Annual Christmas Party on December 12. It will feature a "White Elephant Gift Exchange", so please bring a wrapped gift to the party. Gifts should be fun and inexpensive. Re-gifting is encouraged. ● If you are a student in grades 8 through 12, please consider joining us for our next meeting. All meetings are held from 6:30-7:30 pm in St. Anthony's Hall. ● If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Sunderman at psunderman@sacredheartschool.net

"Second Sunday" Social

*This Sunday - 12(noon) to 1:30 pm
in the Parish Hall*

All are welcome regardless of the Mass you attend.

Schola Cantorum Christmas Concert

Enjoy the annual family program of music for Christmastide featuring candlelit processions, Gregorian Chant and familiar and new carols. Dr. Donald Kendrick will conduct Schola Cantorum in their annual Christmas Concert "From Heaven On High" on Saturday, December 15 at 8:00 pm and Sunday, December 16 at 2:00 pm in Sacred Heart Church. ● Suggested donation is \$15 General or \$10 Students/Seniors. Tickets are available after the 11:00 am Mass on Sundays or by calling 850-545-4298. ● The choir has a variety of CDs that make wonderful gifts. Visit our website at www.scholacantorum.com

Parish Study Group

The Parish Study Group assignment for Thursday, December 13, from 1:00 to 2:30 pm in the Parish Hall is Paragraphs 2828 to 2865 in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. This completes our discussions on the Catechism, which have extended over two years, meeting every other week. ● The Parish owes a great debt of gratitude to Tom Slakey for facilitating the Parish Study Group over the past several years. Tom is retiring from the position. He has generously shared his deep faith, extensive learning, and keen insight with great skill and humility. Thank you very much, Tom.

Parish Financial Report

First Quarter: July thru September 2018

Copies are available in the vestibule.

Consider Making an End of Year Gift

Many parishioners make a special end of year gift to the Parish. This is very much appreciated, enabling the Parish to meet the growing expenses of Parish operations. Such a gift has the added benefit of being tax deductible. You may want to designate your gift to *Sacred Heart Building Fund* for the maintenance and preservation of our church, rectory, and parish hall or to *Sacred Heart Parish School Endowment Foundation* for school families needing tuition assistance or to *Sacred Heart Church* for its general operations. ● We are most grateful for our parishioners' regular and special donations to second collections throughout the year. ● If you are not contributing on a regular basis, please consider doing so. If you have not increased your weekly contribution in some time, and your financial circumstances allow you to do so, please consider increasing your weekly contribution. Like your household expenses, parish expenses continue to increase. ● Thank you for considering this end-of-year appeal.

In Our Prayers

Daily Mass Intentions

December 9 - December 16

Sun	8:00am	Kenneth Belke (+)
	9:30am	For the People of the Parish
	11:00am	Peter Jurisich (+)
Mon	8:00am	John Yeargin (+)
Tue	8:00am	Nita York (+)
Wed	8:00am	Jose, Anna & Luci Oliveira (+)
Thu	8:00am	Gene Domek (+)
Fri	8:00am	Christopher Eduard Sy (+)
Sat	9:00am	Christine Marie Sabin (+)
	5:30pm	Int...Vicki & Marc Sazaki
Sun	8:00am	Int...Eduina Oliveira
	9:30am	Karl John Schnetz (+)
	11:00am	For the People of the Parish