

# Third Sunday of Advent



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## TODAY'S MESSAGE

### YEAR OF FAITH – GAUDETE SUNDAY

This Sunday we celebrate Gaudete Sunday, rejoicing that the time of the Lord is almost here. Our readings remind us that "God is the joy of my soul" and that we are to "rejoice always" and "pray without ceasing." In John's gospel we're reminded of the importance of John's role in proclaiming the coming of Christ, "one who is among you but whom you do not recognize." During this Advent season as we wait in joyful expectation, perhaps we should take a moment to think about how Jesus is already among us but how and when we have failed to recognize him.

I wonder sometimes how our joy would be increased and more in keeping with God's plan if we were to truly proclaim a year of favor as the first reading suggests. What would our ministry and relationships look like if forgiveness and mercy drove all of our decisions? I think we all know the joy that comes from showing compassion and generosity to others; some of the best moments and strongest friendships I've made have been those that manifest a spirit of love and service to others. It is often easy to see where Jesus is in those acts of justice and charity. But where is Jesus in the person who continually tries our patience or in the person who seems to exist solely to remind us of what our pet peeves are?

This Advent perhaps we can begin to rejoice in God by seeking the Christ that we have failed to fully recognize. How do we point the way to Christ as John did in our role as Christians? Who are the people who have helped us along our own faith journeys, leading us to recognize and rejoice in God? And where have we missed God's presence by our unwillingness or inability to proclaim the year of favor from the Lord? Where can we better manifest our love for God by loving and serving others?

Fr. Peter Seimas

## WEEKLY STEWARDSHIP REPORT

Thank you to everyone who supported the mission and ministries of our parish during the month of November. Our average weekly collection for the fifth month of this new fiscal year was \$9,715 (\$10,350 in 2011). This is a 6% decrease. Our budget for Jul – Nov was \$242,000; our actual is \$217,000 (\$25,000 shortfall). What you commit to God's work here at St. Thomas Aquinas will significantly impact our programs, ministries, services, staffing, buildings and grounds. May our good and generous God guide your We encourage everyone to consider using the Sunday Offertory Envelopes or Online Giving as a way of giving to the Lord the "first fruits" of the "treasure" we have received. **THANK YOU FOR SHARING GOD'S GIFTS!**

### Our Weekly Offering

Dec 9 Actual: \$10,500 \* Goal: \$11,000  
 Immaculate Conception: \$1,300  
 Retired Religious: \$4,500

### Please Pray

**FOR THE SICK AND HOMEBOUND** — Norman Swope, Devin Wakefield, Robert Kerrigan Sr., Kathleen Briggs Kerrigan, William McNerny, Theresa Diulus, Fr. Thierry Geris, Douglas Hein, Consuelo Hernandez, Kathy Gibbs, George Kimm, John Braun, Bill Todd, Lester Connelly, Lil Nguyen, Tom Kocal, Rochelle Ford, Gary Goodahl, Carl Bunje

**FOR THE RECENTLY DECEASED** — Betty Stivala, Elizabeth Hiegel, George Locke, Barbara Jorpin, Frances Galea, Virginia Marovich, Jerry McGovern, Gary Fazzino, Francis Tucker O'Brien, Marguerite Purcell

Pray For Lists guidelines: • Have permission from the person to be listed. • Go through the Pastoral Home Ministry to list the names. • Names will be on the list for 3 months and then be removed. • Can request names to be continued after 3 months. Contact the Pastoral Home Ministry 650-494-2496 x22 or [fongmt@hotmail.com](mailto:fongmt@hotmail.com)

## MASS INTENTIONS

Sunday, December 16:

9:00 am SAG ... Thomas & Sons (sp. int.)  
 Readings: Zep 3:14-18a; Is 12:2-6; Phil 4:4-7;  
 Lk 3:10-18

Monday, December 17:

8:30 am OLR ... Virginia Marovich †  
 Readings: Gn 49:2, 8-10; Ps 72:1-4ab, 7-8, 17;  
 Mt 1:1-17

Tuesday, December 18:

8:30 am OLR ... Elizabeth Leon Guerrero  
 (health)  
 Readings: Jer 23:5-8; Ps 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19;  
 Mt 1:18-25

Wednesday, December 19:

8:30 am OLR ... Rachel Martinez (health)  
 Readings: Jgs 13:2-7, 24-25a; Ps 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17; Lk 1:5-25

Thursday, December 20:

8:30 am OLR ... Agnes Cortopassi †  
 Readings: Is 7:10-14; Ps 24:1-6; Lk 1:26-38

Friday, December 21: St. Peter Canisius

8:30 am OLR ... Palomo Family (sp. int.)  
 12:15 pm STA .. Frank Slater †  
 Readings: Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a;  
 Ps 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21; Lk 1:39-45

Saturday, December 22:

5:00 pm STA... Gerolamo Cesano †  
 Readings: 1 Sm 1:24-28; 1 Sm 2:1, 4-8abcd;  
 Lk 1:46-56

## PRESIDERS SCHEDULE

Saturday & Sunday December 22 & 23, 2012

St. Albert the Great  
 Sat 5:00 pm ..... Fr. Seimas  
 Sun 9:00 am ..... Fr. Valenton  
 Sun 11:00 am ..... Fr. Hernandez

St. Thomas Aquinas  
 Sun 7:30 am ..... Fr. Hester  
 Sun 8:45 am ..... Fr. Rubio  
 Sun 10:30 am ..... Fr. Valenton  
 Sun 12 noon ..... Fr. Kromholtz, O.P.

Our Lady of the Rosary  
 Sun 9:00 am ..... Fr. Stanley  
 Sun 10:30 am ..... Fr. Seimas  
 Sun 6:00 pm Youth ..... Fr. Seimas

# St. Thomas Aquinas Parish

## THIS WEEK'S HIGHLIGHTS

Sunday, December 16: Third Sunday of Advent; Las Posadas begins  
9:15, 10:15 am Rel. Ed. (ISP/SESS)  
1:00 pm ..... TMC (OLRH)  
4:00 pm ..... STAYouth (DC)  
4:30 pm ..... Edge (DC)  
7:00 pm ..... Life Teen (DC)

Monday, December 17:  
7:00 pm ..... Latin Class (TH)  
7:00 pm ..... Advent Reconciliation (OLR)

Tuesday, December 18: International Migrants Day  
3:00 pm ..... SESS Choir Practice (SAG)  
7:00 pm ..... Advent Reconciliation (SAG)  
7:00 pm ..... Knights of Columbus (DC)

Wednesday, December 19:  
10:00 am .... Adult Spirituality (PC)  
6:00 pm ..... RCIA for Children (DC)  
6:00 pm ..... SOUP (OLRH)  
7:30 pm ..... Latin Circle (TH)

Thursday, December 20:  
6:30 pm ..... Taize Prayer (OLR)  
7:00 pm ..... Centering Prayer (OLR)

Friday, December 21: Winter begins  
7:30 pm ..... Hispanic Young Adult (OLRH)

Saturday, December 22:  
8:00 am ..... Environment Team (OLR)

*The King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst,  
you have no further misfortune to fear.  
— Zephaniah 3:15b*

## YOUNG ADULT CIRCLE

Dinner at Crepevine, Tues. Dec. 18th at 7:30pm, 367 University Ave., Palo Alto. The Young Adult group meets for its monthly social gathering. Please confirm your attendance on our Facebook Page "Young Adult Circle" or contact us at [yacircle@gmail.com](mailto:yacircle@gmail.com). For more info, see our website, [www.YoungAdultCircle.org](http://www.YoungAdultCircle.org).

## ADVENT PENANCE LITURGIES & CONFESSIONS

During the Advent Season, local parishes in our Deanery will offer several opportunities for you to experience the Sacrament of Reconciliation in preparation for the Christmas Season.

St. Simon Parish on December 17 at 3:30pm & 7:00pm  
**Monday, December 17th at 7:00pm – Our Lady of the Rosary**  
**Tuesday, December 18th at 7:00pm – St. Albert the Great**

St. Athanasius Parish on December 18 at 7:30pm  
St. William Parish on December 19 at 3:30pm  
St. Nicholas Parish on December 19 at 7:30pm  
St. Thomas Aquinas Church on December 22 at 11:30am (Confessions Only)  
St. Albert the Great Church on December 23 at 4:15pm (Confessions Only)

## SHOP FOR CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

Use your special skills at Christmas shopping to make up wonderful bags of toys for the many children being helped by St Vincent de Paul in East Palo Alto. The toys have been supplied by our parish giving trees and from many other sources. Skill in selecting the right toys does make a difference.

Selecting, packing and delivering of these Christmas gifts will take place Friday and Saturday, (12/21 & 12/22). The hours are between 1 and 5 pm. To help, just show up at the St Francis of Assisi Church, 1425 Bay Rd., East Palo Alto. The new work site is located on Bay Rd. just to the right of the church and church office

For information call George Chippendale, 856-6350 (home) or 391-4199 (cell).

If you haven't already donated a gift, please take a tag from the giving tree and place your gift under the tree unwrapped. Because of your generosity, many children will have a Merry Christmas. Thanks so much.

## ST. VINCENT DE PAUL CONFERENCE

Eight Hundred and Thirty One. That is the number of food bags our St. Thomas Aquinas St. Vincent de Paul Conference gave out in the 2011-2012 fiscal year. It is because of the great generosity of you, our parish members that makes it possible for us to do this work.

Our Conference not only supplies our clients with food bags, we meet many other emergency needs. We provide rent help, utility help, help with purchasing medicine, shoes, food vouchers, cell phone help, money for travel. We essentially provide help in most areas of daily life. These needs are provided to help the client in an emergency and in the future the client is expected to provide for his own needs.

The members of our Conference wish to thank you for your admirable generosity. We wish you a most blessed Christmas Season & with hopes that these blessings over flow into the New Year.

## CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS & FLOWERS

We need your help in making our churches look beautiful for the holidays. Won't you consider making a donation toward a poinsettia plant in remembrance of a loved one or just as a gift from you? Special Christmas Flower Envelopes are available in the pews. All of your gifts will be greatly appreciated.

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# December 16, 2012

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## THE CHRISTMAS STORY – A BALLET

Join us for a delightful production of The Christmas Story - the story of the birth of Jesus - set to the music of The Nutcracker Suite. Susan Olsen, new Catechetical Coordinator for Children's Ministries, is bringing her dance companies (adults and children) from Holy Family to share this ballet with the people of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish. Tickets are available in the Pastoral Center and at the door.

Date: Sunday, December 16, 2012, Time: 2:00 p.m.

Location: St. Albert the Great, Seton School Hall

Tickets: \$10 for adults, \$5 for children, (Family ticket for 2 adults and children in the family - \$50)

All proceeds from the sale of tickets will go to a fund for new carpet at St. Albert the Great. If you have questions about this production, please contact Susan in the Pastoral Center (494-2694, ext. 25) or [suolsen@dsj.org](mailto:suolsen@dsj.org).

## MEMORIAL MASS FOR MARGUERITE PURCELL

There will be a Memorial Mass for Marguerite Purcell on Monday, December 17th at 12:00 noon at St. Albert the Great Church. A reception follows in the Hospitality Center.

## IRELAND PILGRIMAGE

It's that time again! Fr. Matt will be leading a pilgrimage to the Emerald Isle where we will spend some time in the Waterford area, Killarney, Galway, Connemara, Knock, Sligo and Dublin. This is a beautiful country and we will surely have a grand old time! We will depart the states on August 19, 2013 and return on August 29 unless you opt for the extended trip to London for four days. If you do, you will return on September 1. If you are interested in joining us, please contact Fr. Matt at 650-494-2496 ext. 12 or [mstanley@dsj.org](mailto:mstanley@dsj.org). I hope to see many of you on this special pilgrimage!

## AN INVESTMENT IN YOUR PARISH

For many years our Catholic parishes & schools have benefited from the charitable gifts of appreciated property from nay good and generous people. Year-end giving becomes an important consideration for many people in these last weeks of the year 2011. The knowledge that your gifts is assisting and advancing the mission of the Catholic Church can bring about tremendous good in our world. If you are able to make a gift of appreciated stock, properties, or cash, while reducing your tax liability, please contact Chuck Tully ([ctully@dsj.org](mailto:ctully@dsj.org)) or (650) 494-2496.