

22 December 2019
Fourth Sunday in Advent

Saint Anne

SEAL BEACH



Rembrandt, *The Dream of Saint Joseph*

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MASSES: SAT: 5:00 PM; SUN: 8:00, 10:00 AM, 12:00, 4:00 PM; DAILY: 9:00 AM

CONFESSIONS: Mon. - Sat. 8:30AM; Sat. 4:00-4:45 PM

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GIFT GIVING

In the family of a friend of mine, opening Christmas presents was a frenzy. The siblings just grabbed from under the tree any package with his or her name on it, then ripped off the wrapping to find out what's underneath. My friend told me that it all took less than twenty minutes, no matter how many gifts there were.

It was not that way in my family. Each gift was opened one by one before the whole family, the youngest going first and, me, the eldest going last, until we had opened everything. What ever happened to rank having its privileges?

Nowadays I am more focused on what I give to those I love, than in what I get. When I see what strikes me as just the right gift, I buy it and then set it aside until I can give it at Christmas. I sometimes buy a thing in the April or May savoring how much I am certain it will delight. The problem is that in a weak moment, I sometimes just give the gift right away; why should the poor guy have to wait until Christmas when he can be enjoying it right now? The other problem is that I hide a gift away in a closet and then forget I have it purchased already. There's probably a "Remember my Presents" app to help me keep track.



Sandro Botticelli, The Virgin Adoring the Sleeping Christ Child

Preachers sometime take to complaining about how "commercial" Christmas has become. "It's all about the 'stuff,'" they say. They suggest that we should all get back to the "spiritual" meaning of Christmas, "Remember the reason for the season," by which they mean, I suppose, more singing of hymns and reaching out to the poor, especially the homeless in winter. Think of the Holy Family spending the first cold, dark night, away from home, in a shed or a cave.

I am not that kind of preacher. I think we should be doing it all. Yes, the homeless and the hymns, but also the wonderful human pleasure of delighting someone with a gift and savoring the enjoyment in their eyes when they open the package.

One of the earliest of the church fathers, Saint Irenaeus of Lyon, wrote, "God created Adam to have someone upon whom to shower gifts." At Christmas we remember that the Father's biggest gift to believers was the human presence of his divine Son born here among us in Bethlehem.

Msgr. Mike

Around our Parish

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS

PENNIES FROM HEAVEN AND INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES FUNDRAISER

St. Anne's Knights of Columbus want to thank our parishioners for their continued generosity in supporting these two important causes. Pennies from Heaven raised \$6,045 to benefit Pregnancy Centers and Women's Shelters in Orange County. The Intellectual Disabilities fundraiser generated \$1,073 to assist children and adults with cerebral disabilities.

MONTHLY MEETING / MEMBERSHIP

All interested Catholic men are invited to attend our Council meetings. We typically meet the 1st Monday of each month at 7:00 PM in the Parish Hall. The next meeting is scheduled for January 6th. For more information, please contact Russell at 949-527-0172

"Help Us Help Those In Need"

SAINT STEPHEN - December 26

"A man filled with faith and the Holy Spirit" (Acts 6:5): thus Luke introduces Stephen, first of seven deacons chosen by the community for its ministry of charity, first to lay down his life in witness to Christ. As the church's first martyr, Stephen's life and death mirror the preaching and passion of Jesus, "the faithful witness" (Greek, martyr) (Revelation 1:5). Like Jesus, Stephen works "great signs and wonders among the people" (Acts 6:8). Like Jesus, when falsely accused, Stephen's face radiates angelic serenity (Acts 6:15), though his tongue, like Jesus', is a two-edged sword. As the dying Jesus forgave his executioners, even making excuses for them, then commended his spirit into his Father's hands (Luke 23:34, 46), so Stephen intercedes for his murderers and begs Jesus to receive his spirit (Acts 7:60, 59). How fruitful both passions! The penitent thief inherits Paradise; Saul, who consented to Stephen's killing, is transformed into the fearless preacher Paul. Thus Stephen challenges us to bear witness not in words only, but by Christ-like forgiveness toward all.

-Peter Scagnelli, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

PARISH OFFICE CLOSED

The parish office will be closed on Tuesday, December 24th and Wednesday, December 25th. Merry Christmas!



OUR MISSION:

Saint Anne Church exists to help us become disciples of Jesus Christ who connect with God, grow in faith, and serve in love.

REDISCOVER THE SAINTS

St. Anne's is pleased to offer our parishioners another inspirational book by Matthew Kelly this Christmas. *Rediscover the Saints* is not a biography about saints. It is an invitation to reflect on how the saints are active in our lives and to let them be even more involved. We are capable of so much more than we think. God is constantly trying to open our eyes to the amazing possibilities that he has enfolded in our being. The saints continue this work, encouraging us to explore all our God-given potential, not with speeches but with the example of their lives. When we have the courage to collaborate with God and pursue our truest self, he lights a fire within us that is so bright and warm, it keeps shining long after our days on this earth have come to an end. The subtitle of the book is 'Twenty-Five Questions That Will Change Your Life' but in reality, the book has far more than 25 questions and many of them are deep and penetrating and will stir your heart, your soul, your spirit. The focuses are on recognizing the opportunities to create holy moments, and looking at how God worked through the saints, and can work through us.

Please pick up a copy of the book from the vestibule of the church. One per family please!

CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

CONFESSIONS:

December 16-21	8:30-8:50 AM
December 21	4:00-4:45 PM
December 23-24	8:30-8:50 AM



MASSES:

December 24	4:00 PM, Children's Mass
	4:00 PM, Youth Mass (Hall)
	6:00 PM
	9:00 PM
December 25	9:00 AM
	12:00 PM



Dynamic Faith

TRUST IN GOD

On this final Sunday of Advent our scriptures focus on the historical birth of Jesus, who is son of David and Son of God, child and king, Jesus and Emmanuel.

Isaiah the prophet begs Ahaz to ask for a sign, to allow God to offer him reassurance of the survival of the Davidic dynasty. The king hypocritically refuses to “tempt the LORD” in that way (Isaiah 7:12), but the prophet foretells the birth of a son, an heir to the throne, who will prove the Lord’s enduring protection of God’s chosen lineage on the throne of David. The child will be called Emmanuel.

Matthew’s reference to this history in his description of the birth of Jesus highlights the contrast between the faithless refusal of trust shown by Ahaz, and the complete trust in God shown by Mary and Joseph in bringing about the birth of Jesus Christ. Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co.

CHRISTMAS

A young mother, her eyes shining with fatigue, who is arranging her hair; a father who finds himself alone with his pretty wife and baby, straightening the stable to make himself useful in some way; shepherds who bring cheese and perhaps also some curdled milk; sheep who look at their shepherds while bleating; a donkey who is eyeing his manger changed into a cradle; an adorable swaddled baby whom one calls Savior, Christ and Lord: This is the manifestation of the goodness and the tenderness of God. This is the most fantastic birth in the history of humanity, the one which changed the face of the world! This is how far God humbled and compromised himself with us! This is Emmanuel!



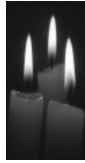
—From *God’s Word Is Our Joy*, Vol. 1 by Lucien Deiss, CSSp, copyright © 1998, World Library

TV MASS FOR THE HOMEBOUND

Is someone you love unable to join us at church during this holy time of Advent and Christmas? For the faithful at home or in healthcare settings, the TV Mass brings spiritual comfort and the blessings of joyful hope in our Savior. Masses are also available online at www.HeartoftheNation.org.

9:00 AM MASS INTENTIONS

12/23 †Jim Swearingen
 12/24 For our Parish
 12/25 For our Parish
 12/26 †Susan & Patti Smith
 12/27 Matthew Reichman
 12/28 †Noemi Baeza
 (†Rest in God's love and peace)



PLEASE PRAY FOR



Fr. Bob Vidal, Katia Bergstrom, Juanita Kho, Kathy Purcell, Julia Poirier, Jerome Gendron, Jim Ferguson, Mary Maskell, Mary Kiely, Steven Lang, Linda Bolt, Marlene Blackford, Bob Wagner, Bob Rattray, Julie Rivera, Pat Giacomi, Ernie Ramirez, Mike Harvey, John Barnes, Mary Kunz, Katherine Irwin, Dixie Redfean, Beverly Maybrier, Cathy Oliver, John Holland, Dorothy Ceballos, L. Tanguay, Leo Zuvich, Ed Michaud

"He who carries God in his heart bears heaven with him wherever he goes." — St. Ignatius of Loyola

SACRAMENTS

Baptism: Contact the Parish Office to arrange for baptism. Baptisms are usually celebrated the first Saturday of the month at 11:00 a.m. Baptism preparation classes for parents and Godparents are held once a month on a Tuesday night at 7:00 p.m.

PreK-8 Faith Formation: For information about Faith Formation programs, please call 562-431-0721 ext. 16 or email faithformation@stannesealbeach.org.

Confirmation: For information about our Youth Ministry programs, please call 562-431-0721 ext. 15 or email ym@stannesealbeach.org.

Marriage: An appointment with one of our priests to begin marriage preparation must be made at least six months before the wedding celebration.

Funeral: Contact the Parish Office to arrange funerals.

Sacrament of the Sick: In case of serious illness, contact the Parish Office.

Pastoral Care: If you, or someone you know, wishes to have their name placed on our prayer net, or a visit and/or Holy Communion, please contact the Parish Office.