

For The Bulletin Of December 3, 2017



From Father Robert

Welcome to a new Liturgical Year! We are plunged into the First Sunday of Advent with a reading from the Gospel of St. Mark, Chapter 13. Jesus speaks about the coming end time, encouraging Peter, James, John, and Andrew (and us!) to be watchful, to be prepared, and to recognize the signs of the times. The passage concludes this ominous chapter with the key word “watch” that occurs in each but one verse. “Watch” is an appropriate word with which to begin our Advent Season. We are to be prepared for the Lord’s coming, not knowing precisely when that will be. We, like the gatekeeper, keep watch in the evening, at midnight, at dawn, and in the morning. Like the early disciples, we know not when He comes, but that He is coming. Many novelists have written books using this chapter to discern precisely when the end time will be. Though Scripture clearly states that nobody knows the day or the hour, these charlatans claim to know the month and year, and you can too if you buy their books!

Today we read this passage from Mark 13 not as a code book to discern the exact “when” of the end time, while wondering what the “desolating abomination standing” is and when that might occur. Rather, we recognize that Mark wrote at a time when the early Christians expected Jesus’ imminent return. The four apostles in the story were likely dead by the time of this writing. It might have seemed that Jesus was not coming back as He had promised. So the readers of Mark’s gospel were given a new promise: “this generation will not pass away until all these things have taken place” (Mark 13:30). These early Christians saw in the events of their time “nation...rising against nation,” “earthquakes,” and “famines,” as the “beginnings of the labor pains” signifying the end was near (13:8). But unfortunately, we know these kinds of cataclysmic events happen with some regularity. That generation did in fact pass away. The early Christians did not imagine we would be reading this gospel two thousand years later.

Still, we can discern the signs of our own times and recognize the Lord’s coming, perhaps not in an apocalyptic sense, but in the Christmas incarnation. That is, Jesus, the Word of God, comes to us in flesh and blood. Jesus is the incarnation of God, and He comes to us sacramentally in the Eucharist. Each generation seems to say the end is near. While we are looking to the sky for signs of the end time, the Lord is in our midst in weakness and vulnerability. Do we see Jesus present in that disguise? Or is it easier and “more fun” to be caught up with a code book, discerning the end time and seeking the “abomination

standing”? Instead, we see that God is in our midst. The key word for this Sunday is “watch.” But we may also, “recognize.”

Living The Paschal Mystery

Many times we are impressed by big events, fireworks, theme parks, light shows, and so much more. We mark special events with parties, celebrations, dinners, family, friends, and loved ones. While these are natural tendencies, Christianity is also about finding meaning in the small, seemingly inconsequential events in our lives. Changing a diaper is a routine task for parents, but it is also an act of charitable love. Preparing a meal for a family gathering can be tedious and time-consuming, but it too is an act of charitable love. Being fully present to another can be difficult for us who are accustomed to checking mobile devices several times an hour, but it is an act of charitable love. Most of us are not going to do grandiose acts of charity for which we are praised and thanked on the evening news. But it is our everyday tasks done with intention and meaning that can make the difference between routine and a day filled with self-giving love.

What then shall we ask of ourselves as we begin this new Liturgical Year? What goals are being set before us? How does last Sunday’s Feast of Christ the King “dovetail” into this First Sunday of Advent? What are the “threads” that wind their way from one liturgical year into another?

- In what experiences of your life have you come to realize the preciousness and limits of time?

- Have you ever “missed” the good and affirming in your life through inattention or distraction?
- What has been your most difficult experience of waiting – and how were you able to persevere to its fulfillment?
- How can this Advent Season be a time of restoration, of re-creation for you personally?



The Distinguished Discipleship Award

Last Sunday at the conclusion of our 8:00 a.m. Eucharist, I had the privilege to honor **Jose and Alicia Perez** with The Distinguished Discipleship Award. The plaque which I presented to them, along with a beautiful floral arrangement and Gift Certificate for Dinner at “La Veranda Ristorante” in Pittsburg, reads as follows:

***The Distinguished
Discipleship Award Of
St. Ignatius of Antioch Parish
Is Presented To***

Jose and Alicia Perez

***In recognition of the service
and ministry you have***

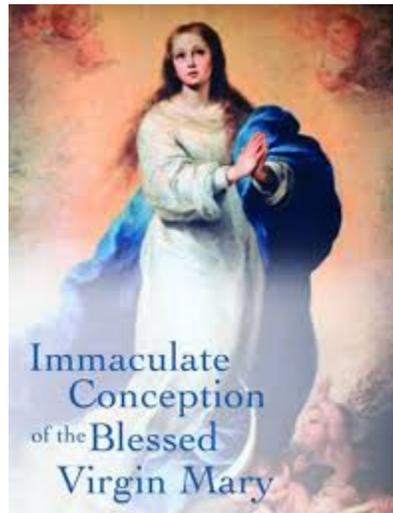
provided to the parish and the wider community as:

Charter Members, helping to establish and build the present church building; Leadership in Corazon building homes for the homeless in Mexico, Jose's work with the Red Cross as a volunteer assisting in recovery at sites of natural disasters throughout the United States, Jose's work with the Knights of Columbus, Parking Lot Security, serving as an Usher for Liturgies, Member of the Parish Community Garden Ministry; your joint efforts with the American Cancer Society Relay for Life, raising thousands of dollars for Cancer Research, Jose's work with Winter Nights Shelter for the homeless; Alicia's ministry as a member of the Choir, a Cantor, volunteering as a Catechist for Children and Adults through Faith Formation, RCIA and RCIC, and an Office Receptionist

We thank God for you, your dedication, commitment, and love of God and the Parish of St. Ignatius of Antioch.

*Presented
26 November 2017
The Feast of Christ the King*

Congratulations! And, thank you once again from all of us for all you have done so selflessly to help build God's kingdom in our midst.



This coming Friday, December 8th, is the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. We are privileged to celebrate Holy Eucharist three times for your convenience: 8:00 a.m., 12:00 Noon, and 7:30 p.m.



***Brentwood Community Chorus
Christmas Concert Here
December 15th***

Please mark your calendars for a wonderful Christmas Concert as the 85 voice Brentwood Community Chorus presents their annual Christmas Concert here on Friday, December 15th, 7:30 p.m. The program will feature classical as well as contemporary music of the season. The concert will be followed by a festive reception in our parish hall. There is no charge to attend, however, there will be the opportunity for a free will donation. The concert will also include the use of instruments and handbells!



You are invited to join our Filipino Community for the traditional nine day novena of liturgies leading up to Christmas, beginning December 16th through the 24th at 5:00 a.m. each morning in the church, followed by a traditional Filipino Breakfast in our parish hall. The presider and homilist this year is **Fr. Ricky Pacoma** who is coming from the Philippines just for our parish! Ministries have been forming as well as sponsors for the breakfast each day. If you are interested in being a part of this wonderful cultural and spiritual

event, please contact **Estrella Rusk, Financial Secretary**, in the Parish Office. While he is here, Fr. Ricky will also celebrate the 50th anniversary of his parents who are members of our parish.



Christmas Environment

Once again we invite you to be a part of a great tradition here at St. Ignatius of Antioch. Each year, parishioners contribute to the Christmas Environment Fund to provide the Christmas trees, garlands, wreaths, lights, poinsettias, and fabrics that are used to create an environment that says "Christmas!" for the entire Christmas Season. Donations may be made either in honor of/in memory of family, friends, loved ones. Please make sure to put the correct designation on the outside of your envelope. Christmas Flower envelopes are provided on the credenza at the back of the church, beneath the icon of St. Paul. Thank you for your continued generosity and support.



This year, The Fourth Sunday of Advent falls on December 24th. Please note that there will be only one liturgy that morning at 10:00 a.m. The liturgies of Christmas begin that afternoon as follows:

**Christmas Eve, December 24th
4:00 p.m. Eucharist for Families with Children**

Beloved Carols, the Children tell the Story of Christmas, Holy Eucharist; Cantors and Organ

9:00 p.m. The Solemn Eucharist of Christmas Night

Procession, The Choir and Cantors, Beloved Carols (No Incense)

Christmas Day, December 25th

9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.

The Liturgies of Christmas Day, Procession, Beloved Carols, The Choir and Cantors (No Incense)



...to our wonderful volunteer parishioners who arrive early every Saturday morning to clean and prepare

the church for the weekend and week ahead: **Jun Bajet, Carole Miller, Mency Osborne, Angela Bueno, Jack Goncalves, Emilia Freking, and Steve Rojek.**

...to our wonderful volunteer parishioners who clean and maintain the bathrooms in both the church and parish hall each week: **Steve Rojek, Mary Ewing, Patricia Britton, and Harlan Young.**

...to the members of our Art & Environment Committee for creating the beautiful environment for the Advent Season: **Rich Confetti, Nancy DiMaggio, Denise Moss, Don Benson, Jose Palomino, Harlan Young, Pablo and Norma Villegas, Pat Kramer, Tony and Claudia Gumina, Lee Oliver, Tom and Stevie Catchings, Patricia Britton and Lorraine Lohmeier.**

...to **Dilcia Aparacio** who does such an excellent job of washing, ironing, and caring for the Sacred Linens.

...to our Sacristans and Altar Guild who prepare the sanctuary for the celebration of Eucharist each week:

Peter Degl'Innocenti, Pam and Rich Confetti, Vincent Rodriguez, Harlan Young, Rowena Cayaban, Monika Kauer, Cynthia Enrique, Belen Farin, Nancy Santos and Rose Salamanca.

...to **our counting teams** who are here every week to count the weekly collections.

...to our volunteers who assisted in the parish office last week:

Yvette Young, Melodye Costanza, Harlan Young, Joe Fanfa and Bev Iacona.

...to our St. Vincent de Paul and Mobile Mall volunteers who transported last week's donations: **Bob Carvalho and Barbara Jackson.**

...to our faithful weekly bulletin assembly team: **Carole Miller and Yvette Young.**

...to our wonderful Parking Lot Security who keep watch over our vehicles during the Thanksgiving Liturgy: **Don Benson** and weekend liturgies: **Don Benson, Steve Rojek and Jose Perez.**



Congratulations Don Pearson!

This weekend marks the 10th Anniversary of the Appointment of **Don Pearson as our Director of Music/Organist/Artist-In-Residence.**

It is an opportunity to congratulate him in his ministry of providing music for our liturgies, holy days, weddings, funerals, and special occasions, in addition to training Cantors, rehearsing the Choir, and playing our magnificent Rodgers Pipe/Digital Organ. Every service he plays reveals his artistry, creativity, and enthusiasm for our worship, his love for God, and for our parish community. His accompaniment of the hymns and acclamations have inspired energetic, enthusiastic, and joyful singing of the Liturgy week-after-week. And how many of us have been moved to tears by his playing! There is no one else in our area who possesses the gifts, talent, and creative/artistic ability to do what Don does on a regular basis. In addition, he oversees the Concert Series which has been such a gift not only to us but to the wider East Contra Costa Community as evidenced

by the attendance at the French Boys Concert, the Cabaret, and the Observance of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation. On behalf of all of us, thank you, Don, for all you have done and continue to do to help us raise our voices in joyful song to our Loving God, to move our hearts, and to inspire us to full, active, conscious participation in the Liturgy.