

St. Stephen Catholic Church

1101 Keaveny Ct., Walnut Creek, CA 94597 925-274-1341
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First Sunday

OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 2, 2018

*There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars.
 When these signs begin to happen,
 stand erect and raise your heads
 because your redemption is at hand.*

Luke 21:25, 28

Week At A Glance	Upcoming Mass Intentions																										
<p>Sunday, 12/2 First Sunday of Advent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Coffee & Donuts <p>Monday, 12/3</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parish Office Open, 9:30 am - 1:30 pm Lector's Practice, Chapel 7 pm <p>Tuesday, 12/4</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parish Office Open, 10:00 am - 2:00 pm <p>Wednesday, 12/5</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scripture Study, Room 5 9:30 am Parish Office Open, 11:00 am - 3:00 pm <p>Thursday, 12/6</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enrichment, Rm 5 9:30 am Parish Office Open, 11:00 am - 3:00 pm Choir Rehearsal, 7 pm <p>Saturday, 12/8</p> <p>Sunday, 12/9 Second Sunday of Advent</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Coffee & Donuts 	<p>Sat 12/1 5 pm - Bob Walton † Sun 12/2 9:30 am - Siuta Moala † Tues 12/4 7:30 am - Leonard Pauplis † Wed 12/5 7:30 am - Michael Pauplis † Thur 12/6 7:30 am - Johanna Pauplis † Fri 12/7 7:30 am - Philomena & Michael Pauplis † Sat 12/8 5 pm - Doug Prouty † Sun 12/9 9:30 am - Lillian Pavlovich †</p>																										
<p>Schedule of Masses</p> <p>Mon - Fri: 7:30 am Saturday: 5 pm <i>Chapel, Room 1</i> Sunday: 9:30 am Confessions: Saturday, 4:30 pm</p>	<p>Ministers Schedule Dec. 8 - 9</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Mass</th> <th>Sat. 5 pm</th> <th>Sun. 9:30 am</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>LECTOR</td> <td>B. Rusca</td> <td>R. Minister</td> </tr> <tr> <td>C.L.O.W.</td> <td></td> <td>T. Nguyen</td> </tr> <tr> <td>EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF THE EUCARIST</td> <td>F. McCormick* P. Walton S. Karges</td> <td>J. Jury* D. Minister J. Patel</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ALTAR SERVERS</td> <td>R. Kuca</td> <td>Takafua/Takafua</td> </tr> <tr> <td>SACRISTAN</td> <td></td> <td>M. Ah Yee</td> </tr> <tr> <td>COUNTERS: Dec. 3</td> <td>D. Mammola</td> <td>J. Stark</td> </tr> <tr> <td>COUNTERS: Dec. 10</td> <td>P. Walton</td> <td>J. Brady</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			Mass	Sat. 5 pm	Sun. 9:30 am	LECTOR	B. Rusca	R. Minister	C.L.O.W.		T. Nguyen	EXTRAORDINARY MINISTERS OF THE EUCARIST	F. McCormick* P. Walton S. Karges	J. Jury* D. Minister J. Patel	ALTAR SERVERS	R. Kuca	Takafua/Takafua	SACRISTAN		M. Ah Yee	COUNTERS: Dec. 3	D. Mammola	J. Stark	COUNTERS: Dec. 10	P. Walton	J. Brady
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Dear Friends,

We are commencing the season of Advent this Sunday. From Thanksgiving, which is centered on our family, we now move towards the Holy Family of Jesus, Joseph and Mary. Advent is a time of preparing ourselves for the incarnation, God becoming one of us.



Advent and the Christian Life: It is only in the shadow of Advent that the miracle of Christmas can be fully understood and appreciated; and it is only in the light of Christmas that the Christian life makes any sense. We can find in Advent a solution to the age-old problem of secular Christmas vs. spiritual Christmas. We recognize that Christmas is, most of all, a time to celebrate the birth of Jesus. It's a holiday that focuses on the meaning of the Incarnation. Yet, given the secular traditions of Christmas, we spend most of our time preparing, not for a celebration of the birth of Jesus, but for fulfilling the demands of the season. We have to buy lots of presents for lots of people and make sure they are all wrapped and delivered. We have parties to attend and parties to host. We have relatives who come to visit or, alternatively, we are the relatives who go elsewhere to visit. Remember, God came to usher in the Kingdom of God with all of its blessings. His peace and justice will fill the earth. We can be part of Jesus' mission this advent when we reach out to share our life with and care for people in need, for the hungry and homeless, for victims of injustice and oppression, for those who suffer from sickness or sadness. Advent can be a time to touch those in need, not only so that we might share God's love with them, but also so that our yearning for the kingdom might be renewed within us.

Flu Season is here: As we are already into the flu season, we will be discontinuing the Cup starting the First Sunday of Advent until Easter. And if you are uncomfortable with shaking of hands, you could just say, "Peace be with you" to your neighbor without shaking of hands, and I am sure everyone will understand.

Does one receive the whole Christ if one receives Holy Communion under a single form? Yes! Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior, is wholly present under the appearance either of bread or of wine in the Eucharist. Furthermore, Christ is wholly present in any fragment of the consecrated Host or in any drop of the Precious Blood. Nevertheless, it is especially fitting to receive Christ in both forms during the celebration of the Eucharist. This allows the Eucharist to appear more perfectly as a banquet, a banquet that is a foretaste of the banquet that will be celebrated with Christ at the end of time when the Kingdom of God is established in its fullness (cf. *Eucharisticum Mysterium*, no. 32).

Second Collection for Paradise, CA: Bishop Soto celebrated Mass Nov. 18 at St. John the Baptist Church in downtown Chico for all those affected by the Camp Fire. He especially invited the community of St. Thomas More Parish in Paradise; their church was in the direct line of fire. Many of St. Thomas' parishioners have lost their homes. The Sacramento Diocese confirmed that the church and school buildings survived the fire. The new rectory, old rectory and parish hall were destroyed.

The Society of St. Vincent de Paul and Northern Valley Catholic Social Service are working with partner organizations on local relief and recovery efforts. We will be having a second collection the weekend of December 15 & 16 to support our sisters and brothers affected by the fire. We shall restrict ourselves to a collection for now. We will be in touch with the parish in Paradise and Chico in the coming weeks to ascertain what we can do for them more substantially. I thank you for your generosity as always.

Paulson

First Sunday of Advent December 2, 2018

First Reading: Jeremiah 33:14-16

The prophet Jeremiah lived at a difficult time in Jewish history. Jerusalem, the beloved capitol city, had been destroyed, and most of the people taken captive to far-off Babylon, which is in present-day Iraq. Despite this gloomy setting, Jeremiah expresses the conviction that the Lord will raise up a new leader from the line of David to restore and rebuild their native land.

Second Reading: 1 Thessalonians 3:12-4:2

The date was some 30 years after Christ's death and resurrection. The place was a city in northeast Greece called Thessalonica, where Christians were being persecuted. Paul, who had brought the Gospel there, heard positive reports about them and sent a letter of encouragement.

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Reminder - Lectors **are required** to attend Monday evening practice (7 pm in the Chapel, Rm 1) in order to lector at Masses the following weekend. Mike Milani will be facilitating.

This **Christmas season**, St. Stephen is collaborating with Hillcrest Congregational Church to collect **donations for the homeless** here in our area. We will be accepting donations of socks, knit caps and scarves, gloves and new or gently used men's jackets. A donation box is located in the back of the church.

Thank you for your generous support of our St. Vincent de Paul "Holiday Food Bag" program. We were able to provide bags not only for our clients, but also we were able to provide additional bags we received to the CTK Parish's St. Vincent de Paul program. God Bless!

Join Enrichment on Thursday, December 6, 9:30 am in room 5, for a video about **California State Parks**.



There will be a **2nd collection** next weekend for **Religious Retirement**. Aging women and men religious need your help. Their sacrifice of ministering for years with little or no pay leaves them without adequate retirement savings. Please be generous with your gift to help meet their retirement and health-care needs.

Note: There is **no coffee & donuts** this Sunday or next Sunday due to unavailability of the Hall.

Parish Stewardship Nov. 24/25	
Regular collection	\$ 2505.00
Thanksgiving	\$1214.00
Maintenance	\$ 5.00
Retirement Fund/Religious	\$ 15.00
Campaign Human Dev.	\$ 35.00
St. Vincent de Paul	\$ 25.00
Flowers	\$ 30.00
Donuts	\$ 25.00
Thank you!	

Saint Stephen's **Advent Reconciliation Service** will be on Wednesday, December 12 at 5 PM. Make plans to join us.

Our **Children's Christmas Play** is scheduled for December 24 at the Christmas Vigil Mass at 5:00pm. Children of all ages are encouraged to participate. Rehearsals will be held here at St. Stephen in the Church on Thursday evenings; December 13 and December 20 at 6:00pm. For more information, contact Annette Roux.

SIMBANG GABI: The Filipino Society of CTK invites you to join in the celebration of "Simbang Gabi", a nine-day novena in preparation for the birth of Jesus, at Christ the King Church from December 15th to the 23rd. Mass begins at 6:30 p.m. every night (**except** Sunday, Dec. 16, and Sunday, Dec. 23, when mass begins at 6 p.m.). Light refreshments in the parish hall will be served after each mass. Then join us for a nice celebration and dinner after the conclusion of mass on the 23rd. For additional information, please contact Imelda Santos (623-7340) or Maritess Baula (899-9078).

Little Blue Books are available on the tables in the back of the church. Take one home to read during the Advent season. 2019 Calendars are also available.

Looking for a way to celebrate Advent? Magnificat SOTI, a Ministry for Catholic women invite all to join them at their **Prayer Breakfast**. December 8, 9:30 - 1:30 - **The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary**, a holy day of obligation. Mass will be celebrated at 9:30, followed by breakfast and speaker, Fr. Spencer. Crowne Plaza, 45 John Glenn Drive, Concord. Call Kim at 683-8220 for questions. **Join us for a morning of Praise, Prayer and Inspiration.**

Take heed, o women of leisure! Soon you will shudder in your complacency, for the wine will run dry and the vineyard will be strangled by thorns. Weep now for the coming disaster ... until that day when the Spirit is poured out on us and the wilderness yields a harvest." **Isaiah 32:9-10, 15**



Many of us are notoriously capable of functioning out-of-sync, of living contrary to the rhythms of our own bodies and spirits. We say "yes" when our hearts aren't into it. We push our bodies when our spirits are tired. We juggle impossible schedules. We drink coffee in the evening to resist sleep, and coffee in the morning to jumpstart our wakefulness. We sit for hours at work and at home, though our bodies long to move and breathe and stretch. We use lamps and screens to light our nights long after the sun has set. We hesitate and calculate when our spirits long to leap with joy. Our bodies have circadian rhythms: 24-hour cycles of hormones and neuron activity that keep our bodies' functions in sync. Living out-of-sync with the rhythms of our bodies can negatively impact our health – mind, body, and spirit. We also live out-of-sync with God's rhythms—although in fairness, God's rhythms are rarely intuitive to human nature. Weep now while life is sweet and easy, God says. Lament now before you taste life's bitterness. But when disaster comes, rejoice to know that the Spirit will be poured out like wine. When the fields are empty, dance because a harvest is ripening in the wilderness. Attuning our bodies to their molecular rhythms is important daily work for the sake of our health. Attuning our spirits to God's rhythms is essential daily work for the sake of our faith.

Prayer: Be gracious to us, O God, in our dissonance. Help us focus on your rhythms in all life and your rhythms within our flesh. Amen
Annette Roux, Pastoral Associate (Ret.)

Mission Statement: To Live and to Love in Christ