

**For The Bulletin Of
January 1, 2017**



**THE SOLEMNITY OF MARY,
MOTHER OF GOD, THE
OCTAVE DAY OF
CHRISTMAS, NEW YEAR'S
DAY, THE WORLD DAY OF
PRAYER FOR PEACE**

From Father Robert

We never quite lose our need for affirmation. This can be a destructive need or a healthy need. A destructive need for affirmation, for example, might present itself as seeking inordinate approval, or manipulating others for undeserving compliments, or wangling to be the center of attention. A healthy need for affirmation might present itself as seeking the counsel of another to know we're making good choices for our everyday living, or reflecting on how we interact with others, or recognizing our contributions to family, work, neighborhood.

Both the shepherds and Mary show a need for affirmation in today's gospel. A healthy need, to be sure. A need that shows their encounter with the "infant lying in the manger" makes them who they are and calls them to hear and see

beyond their expectations to embracing the newness of life.

The shepherds came to the manger, encountered the newborn infant, left the stable to make "known the message," then "returned glorifying and praising God." The passage is unclear about to where they "returned." Probably, they returned to their flocks and fields, the same shepherds yet different for all they had "heard and seen." Possibly, however, they returned to the stable seeking further affirmation for "all they had heard and seen," once again encountering this "infant lying in the manger" Who surprised them, affirmed them, and called them to proclaim to all they met a most astounding message. The shepherds show us how to be affirmed in our own encounters with Jesus the Christ and how we are to reflect on this mystery of Jesus' birth and life. Before we can make "known the message," we must encounter Jesus. To affirm that it is *His* message we make known, we must keep coming back to Him to encounter Him anew.

Mary's need for healthy affirmation is evidenced by her taking the events surrounding the birth of her firstborn Son into her heart and reflecting on them. This mother evidences contemplative love flowing from her heart. Mary was present to her Son and present when the shepherds encountered Him. Likewise, Mary is present when we encounter her Son, reflect on the Good News in our hearts, and make known the message of Life to all we meet. Mary is not only the Mother of God. She is the mother of the shepherds. She also is our mother who mothers us into contemplative love, who mothers us into the affirmation that we too can

make “known the message” that the Savior of the world has come.

Living The Paschal Mystery

Mary faced a great mystery she could not understand, reflected on God’s will for her, and was affirmed in her “yes” to become the mother of the Savior. We who face many challenges during life, must ponder God’s will for us, and be affirmed in our “yes” when we encounter the One Who comes to save. The name Jesus (=savior) already points to a life of self-giving and suffering that Mary as Jesus’ mother will experience. The surprise suggested by the first two readings is that we who are God’s children also participate in this experience of self-giving and suffering; this is how we receive blessing. The “yes” all of us must make to do God’s will necessarily means that we cannot escape dying to ourselves. We are affirmed by this festival’s readings, however, in that we are given the grace to place ourselves in God’s hands and do God’s will. Like both the shepherds and Mary, we seek healthy affirmation by returning over and over again to encounter the divine Son.

As we hear today’s readings and mark the first day of a new year, how do we hear the Word of God challenging us?

- Just as “Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart,” I must reflect on...
- Just as the shepherds “made known the message that had been told them,” I must make known this message...
- I imitate Mary’s contemplative love when I...



The Floral Arrangements in the Sanctuary today honor the Twenty-fifth Anniversary of Marriage of Dhanny and Jena Kwa and are also placed In Loving Memory of Dan O’Connor from the O’Connor, Nelms’, and Barnes’ Families.

About Liturgy: The Feast of the Holy Family

Since Christmas was on a Sunday this year, its Octave Day, the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, also falls on a Sunday. As a result, there is no Sunday between Christmas and today’s solemnity, the day on which we usually celebrate The Feast of the Holy Family. This feast is transferred to December 30, a weekday, when most people do not celebrate Holy Eucharist. Not to worry! In a real way, today’s feast is also a feast honoring the Holy Family. Mary is the Mother of this family. She is the Mother of God. She is the Mother of the church. She is the Mother of each of us. Her motherhood is not limited to the Holy Family, but extends to all who need her guidance and care, her courage and strength, her wisdom and intercession.

Just as Mary pondered in her heart the mysteries unfolding before her, so must we ponder these mysteries. Christ’s saving deeds can be understood only through a lifetime of living. Like Mary,

we must be open to all of God's overtures to us, we must respond with our own personal "yes," we must take each event – no matter how difficult or how delightful – as revealing God's plan for us. Mary is our Mother and model. She shows us how to open ourselves to God's Presence, power, and possibilities.

The Visit of Cardinal Levada

An exciting and historic event will take place in our parish on Sunday, January 15th, when **His Eminence, William Cardinal Levada**, will be with us to preside and preach for our 10:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist. He has been a friend since the early 1980's when I was serving as Parochial Vicar at St. Leander Parish, San Leandro. He is the first cousin to my dear friend and colleague, **Fr. Richard Mangini**. Two years ago when we went to Italy to mark the Fortieth Annivesary of my ordination, we were privileged to share Eucharist with Cardinal Levada in his titular church. Now we are able to extend that same gracious invitation to join us for Eucharist here in Antioch. I hope you will plan to be with us.



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Our Concert Series

The first in the series of concerts as a part of our Concert Series will take place on Friday evening, January 20th, when **Don Pearson, Director of Music/Organist/Artist-in-Residence**,

will perform a concert of great masterworks for the organ. The concert begins at 8:00 p.m. and will be followed by a reception in our parish hall. A free will offering will be received to help defray the cost of the reception. I hope you will invite your friends and neighbors to join us.

Liturgical Ministries Morning of Enrichment

Once again this year, we are offering a Morning of Enrichment for All in Liturgical Ministry. This event will take place on Saturday morning, February 11th from 8:30 a.m. to 12:00 Noon. The focus of this year's gathering will be The New Rite of Christian Matrimony and the New Guidelines for Cremation. Joining us will be liturgical ministers from St. Anne's Parish, Byron, and St. Bonaventure Parish, Concord. The workshop on Matrimony will be given by **Anthony Arteaga, Director of Liturgy** for St. Bonaventure and I will be giving the workshop on the new guidelines regarding Cremation. The day will begin with Sung Morning Prayer following hospitality, and then each workshop will be given twice so that all in attendance may participate in each workshop. The morning will conclude with a Commissioning Ritual. Please mark your calendars NOW and plan to be with us for this educational and inspirational morning.

The Annual Pastoral and Financial Report

Each Pastor/Parochial Administrator is required by Diocesan Statute to present an Annual Pastoral and Financial Report to the parish. This Report is an important part of our shared life together as members of St. Ignatius of Antioch Parish and reflects upon the events of the

previous year and how God's Holy Spirit has been at work in us as we share in building His kingdom in our midst. It is also a way of being accountable to you for your Stewardship of Time, Talent, and Treasure, presenting the final Fourth Quarter Financial Report as well as the Budget for 2017. The final part of the Report lays out a vision for the coming new year and the goals to which we wish to commit ourselves. It is important for every registered family to be present. The Report will be given the weekend of January 28th and 29th at each liturgy.

Also, a major Town Hall Meeting is being planned for early February to present the report and recommendations from the **On Going Concern Committee** that has been working for the past six months to address issues concerning finance, administration, and the future viability of our parish. It will be important for the entire registered membership to attend this meeting as well. Please watch both my Insert and the bulletin for the date and time.



...to those who cleaned the church and parish hall in preparation for Christmas: **Carole Miller and Steve Rojek.**
...to those who cleaned and maintained the bathrooms in both the church and parish hall for Christmas: **Robert Goncalves, Virginia Noack, Mary Ewing, and Patricia Britton.**

...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: **Sofie Zimmerman, Melody Costanza, Harlan Young, Jeannine Ford, Karen Oliver, Alicia Perez 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, Frances Rojek, Estrella Rusk and Maryann Peddicord.**

From Mission Elementary School

Dear Father Robert and Parishioners,
Thank you so much for your kind generosity to our students and their families at Christmas. May God bless you for this continued show of love.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Gregg and The Mission Elementary Staff