



**ST. GREGORY  
THE GREAT  
CATHOLIC  
PARISH**

# The Messenger

## Merry Christmas To All

It is time for us to reflect on the gift that is Christmas, the story of the Incarnation. Literally the "enfleshment" of God. This is how God came to live among us, as Emmanuel, God with us. "For a child is born to us, a Son is given..." Isaiah 9:5a

Mary and Joseph were travelers looking for refuge, who were turned away from many doors before benefitting, we assume, from the kindness of a stranger who offered them a place to stay. They were far from home. Mary was about to give birth, and they were in need - a familiar story.

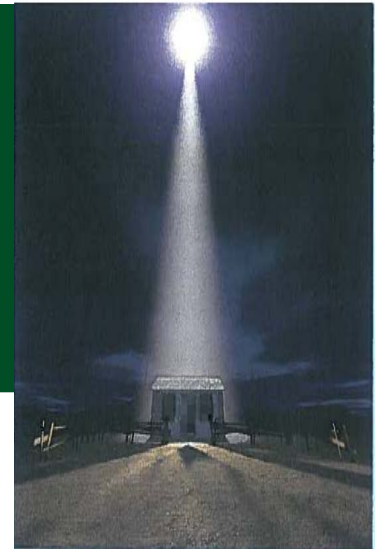
Today, millions of people are in a similar situation. Just recently, we have been forced to think of the plight of refugees and homeless people. Some 1.5 million of them have entered Europe. The heart breaking stories and images of families fleeing their homes in war ravaged countries enters our living rooms. Close to home we are saddened by accounts of homeless people dying in our streets. Inequality is growing worldwide, with half the world's wealth in the hands of 1% of the population. Nor indeed should we avoid these stories.

If Christmas is to mean anything to us, it should impress on us the importance of doing what we can to

welcome the stranger, we are particularly a nation of immigrants.

We just celebrated our parish 30th Anniversary - Congratulations - with a hall full of guests at a banquet celebration with Bishop McElroy. It was also in celebration of the dedication of our hall expansion, with your sacrifice, which increases our capability of welcoming the stranger. Fr. Jim Poulsen, founding pastor, remarked on all the strange faces, as well as familiar ones, who were present. The growth of community takes place in welcoming the stranger, which is one of the corporal works of mercy, like feeding the hungry, clothing the naked and healing the sick. These corporal works of Mercy find fulfillment in our faith community, and God willing, will continue, especially in this holy season.

This we do, not because they are Christian, but because we are Christian. We are Christian because Christmas happened, because God sent Jesus, born in a stable in Bethlehem, to be one of us, and to teach us to be good and compassionate human beings. We are agents of loving Mercy.



*"Unto us a Child is born"*

How better to observe this year of Mercy than by receiving the Lord's mercy in our own lives by celebrating the sacrament of Reconciliation on Tuesday, December 15th at 7:00pm. There is no better preparation for Christmas. It gives meaning to the phrase, come home for Christmas, which is more than a physical journey, but honoring ones life as a sacred journey. We celebrate the wonder and beauty of who we are and who we are becoming, honoring the life that wants to live in us.

Our Christmas Masses are surely our greatest opportunity of the year for the people of God to welcome the stranger into the joyful celebration of the birth of our Saviour. "They name him Wonder-Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace." Isaiah 9:5b

May peace and joy reign in our liturgies and in the hearts of all our families this Holy Season.

Merry Christmas!

*Rev. Nicholas Clavin*

Rev. Nicholas P. Clavin  
Pastor

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# FINANCE REPORT FY2015

## Saint Gregory the Great Church

www.saintgregorythegreat.org 858-653-3540

Annual Income +3%		Year-end 6/30/14	Year-end 6/30/15
Wkly Envelopes/Credit Card Pmts		\$ 1,831,138	\$ 1,866,405
Youth and Confirmation programs		159,831	\$ 150,554
Other parish income		171,111	\$ 206,564
		<b>\$ 2,162,080</b>	<b>\$ 2,223,523</b>
Annual Expenditures -5%			
Salaries and benefits		\$ 780,771	\$ 770,963
Operating & Facility expenses		691,750	\$ 601,796
Debt Payments		178,082	\$ 122,228
Youth and Confirmation programs		158,472	\$ 133,866
Diocesan assessments		216,738	\$ 244,405
Charitable contributions		30,060	\$ 78,999
		<b>\$ 2,055,873</b>	<b>\$ 1,952,256</b>

### General Observations

> The year's contributions increased by \$35,000 or 2% over last year. Father Nick is extremely grateful for your continued generosity.

> Overall operating disbursements decreased by 5%

> Operating and facility expenses decreased 15% this year.

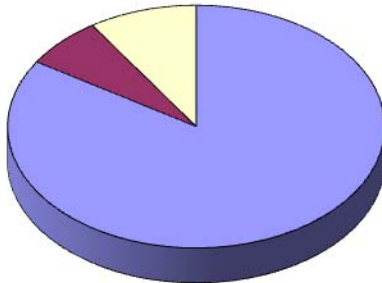
> The Parish's debt service decreased because the School paid a larger portion of the expense in 2015.

> The Diocese assessment of \$244,000 includes \$32,000 to the secondary school initiative.

> The School generated enough revenue to cover its expenses, pay a 50% of the monthly debt service, and support future capital projects.

### Annual Parish Income FY2015

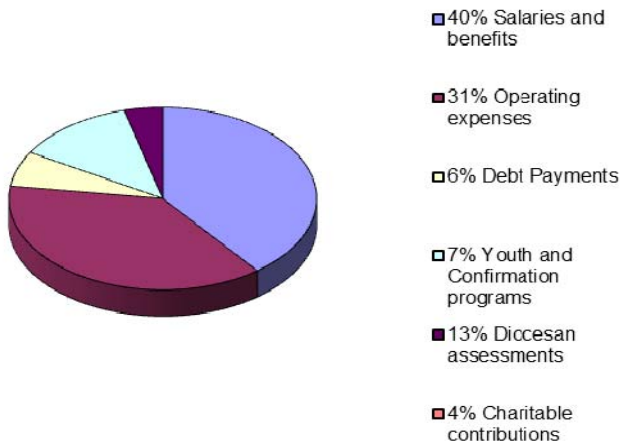
- 83.9% Weekly Contributions
- 6.8% Youth and Confirmation
- 9.3% Other Parish Income



### Contributing Households

Households		%	Weekly Giving
2014	2015		
73	93	5%	\$60 or more
101	103	5%	\$40 to 59
164	183	9%	\$25 to \$39
128	131	6%	\$20 to \$24
158	158	8%	\$15 to \$19
225	253	12%	\$10 to \$14
398	308	15%	\$5 to \$9
887	824	40%	\$1 to \$4
<b>2134</b>	<b>2053</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>Active Households</b>

### Annual Parish Expenditures FY2015



### Recommendations:

> As God's stewards of treasure, please carefully reflect on your contributions as a sacrificial sharing.

> Our parish requires everyone's financial support for daily operations, please consider contributing consistently.

> We strongly encourage parishioners to consider signing up for automatic credit card payments.

> If your income has increased over the past year, please consider increasing your tithe.





## ST. GREGORY THE GREAT CATHOLIC SCHOOL

This first trimester at St. Gregory the great Catholic School has been filled with amazing curricular and co-curricular programs, community building, and commitment to stewardship as a way of life. **We wish everyone a joyous Advent and faith-filled Christmas Season.**

### Curricular and Co-Curricular Programs

The newly incorporated iXL Math and iXL Language Arts are digital programs provided to our students that add an individualized dimension to the core curriculum. Accelerated Reader is an individualized reading program that allows students to “Reach for the Stars”, inspiring a love of reading as a life-long passion. We are very proud of our **Academic Decathlon Team** who are diligently preparing to compete against students in other Catholic schools in the Diocesan Academic Decathlon in March. Seventh graders are putting the finishing touches to their science fair projects and will submit to the **Great San Diego Science & Engineering Fair** in January.



Fall sports are winding down after a very successful season. The JV and Varsity flag football and volleyball teams demonstrated great sportsmanship and Guardian Pride throughout the season. Cheer, Young Engineers Lego Challenge, Guitar, and Christian Youth Theater were additional after-school activities in the fall.

### Community Building

**The Fall Festival** was a tremendous success again this year. Despite scorching temperatures attendees enjoyed fun and games, delicious food, and fabulous entertainment. The highlight of the day was “Mass on the Grass”.



The first **Pasta Festa Dinner** of the year, held in the parish hall in October, was a great success with attendance of over three hundred people from both the school and parish communities.



The **Annual Turkey Trot**, held at the school on November 6, was an opportunity for students to raise funds for the technology program. This year, students participated in “Faith Families”, each “family”

wearing the same color shirt. Over \$14,000 was raised by our amazing kids, which is designated for the purchase of iPads for the classrooms.





## Stewardship

Our students are encouraged to seek out opportunities to serve both locally and globally. School-wide service projects so far this year include the following:

**The Great Quarter Race.** In partnership with Cross Catholic Outreach, students raised 7,584 quarter, each quarter representing a meal, for hungry children around the world. Our community held a special prayer service on World Food Day in October.



### **Children's Rosary Makers Ministry**

Almost thirty students at our school volunteered to make Mission Rosaries during October and November, giving their time and talent during lunch and after school. Under the guidance of staff member, Debbie Howard, these students made over one hundred forty rosaries, which Fr. Nick blessed at our school liturgy. Sr. Eva Rodriguez, from the Diocesan Missions Office, visited our school before Thanksgiving, and the students were excited to present her with these rosaries to bring to mission children somewhere in the world.

### **Thanksgiving Food Drive**

It was our honor again this year to partner with the Sister Parish Outreach Ministry in support of the Food Drive for Our Lady of Angels Parish. Motivated by our energetic Student Council, our students exceeded their goal of 1,000 food items by 50%.

### **Nidia's Kitchen**

Eighth grader, Cindy Graf, has a great idea for a stewardship project. She has hosted two Coffee and Donuts Sales so far, getting donations from local vendors! The first sale made \$128 and our second made \$118. All the money is going to Nidia's Kitchen. Nidia lives in a **Build a Miracle** house in Tijuana, Mexico. After receiving her new house, she decided to give back to the community by providing breakfast to hungry children on their way to school.



### **Kids News Day**

In support of Rady Children's Hospital, our students raised \$230 on Kids News Day by purchasing the special edition newspaper.

### **Immaculate Heart Ministry**

Eighth grader, Patrick Walthall, had a wonderful idea to put devotion to our Blessed Mother into action. He now leads the Immaculate Heart Ministry at school, a group of seventeen students, who have committed to maintaining and enhancing the Marian Grotto.





## From the Deacon's Desk

As the calendar year winds down and the Church year begins, with Thanksgiving behind us, as the air chills even here in San Diego our thoughts turn to Christmas. The lights, the smells, the sounds all set the scene. But what is the scene that is being set? There is a song out that is perfect for Advent, "Go Light Your World" by Chris Rice, easily googled. It's about each of us possessing a candle. Many of us have candles that shine brighter than others and for some their candle has gone out. This Advent season is about lighting candles to dispel the darkness of those around us, seen and unseen. Our Advent journey should include looking around and being aware of those who need their candle to burn brighter. There are the lonely, the forgotten even in our own family, neighborhood, work place and Church.

Let this Advent be a different and deeper experience than Black Friday and Cyber Monday. Pray more often for the needs of others. Our prayers have power. As we focus on the Jubilee Year of Mercy, God's mercy is given to those who desire it (read the book of Joel in the Hebrew Testaments, it is very short.) Your asking for mercy in the name of others, is one way of lighting another's candle. PRAY for others! When you see an emergency vehicle pass by, with its lights flashing and siren screaming, pray for the safety of all involved both the responders and those in need, bless them with the sign of the cross, it makes a difference. If you know someone down the street who is alone, visit them. If you see a homeless person on the street, don't just ease your mind with a dollar bill. Give them the twenty dollars you saved on that Black Friday sale item. Did you know you can go to the ATM and get another? Seriously, think about that, most of us can. That twenty dollar bill you saved, and then gave, has become something priceless.

One last thought, I often think of how Mary having given birth to Jesus must have thought, as she held him in her arms; this is the one who created all that is, far before her own life. Yet, she sits holding this God child in her arms. What kind of God must this be? What kind of God would give his very life that we might have life eternal? What kind of God would let us hold him in our hands at Mass? And all he asks in return is to go light the candle of another. Light one or two candles this year and make the world a little brighter.

Have a joyful and meaningful Advent and Christmas will take care of itself.

## 30th Anniversary Celebration



We were very blessed to have Bishop McElroy preside at our 30th Anniversary Mass and then bless the hall expansion and join us for dinner.



Our very own St. Gregory the Great lead us in a trivia game.



Before and After



More pictures on the next page!

# 30th Anniversary



Almost 400 of us enjoyed a delicious dinner & entertainment. Thank goodness for the expanded hall!



Club 7 was our entertainment and they were fabulous.

Fr. Nick and Mrs. O'Connell welcoming the crowd.



## Christmas Liturgy Schedule

### *Advent Reconciliation Service*

Tuesday, December 15, 2015 ~ 7:00 PM

### *Christmas Eve Masses*

Thursday, December 24, 2015

Children's Choir ~ 4:00 PM

Youth Choir ~ 6:00 PM

Youth Choir ~ 8:00 PM

Choir with brass/strings ~ 10:00 PM

### *Christmas Day Masses*

Friday, December 25, 2015

7:30 AM, 9:00 AM, & 11:00 AM

### *The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph*

Vigil: Saturday, December 26, 2015 ~ 5:00 PM

Sunday, December 27, 2015

7:30 AM, 9:00 AM, 11:00 AM, & 5:00 PM

### *The Octave of Day of the Nativity of the Lord*

### *Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God*

Vigil: Thursday, December 31, 2015 ~ 5:00pm

Friday, January 1, 2016 ~ 9:00am

### *The Epiphany of the Lord*

Vigil: Saturday, January 2, 2016 ~ 5:00 PM

Sunday, January 3, 2016

7:30 AM, 9:00 AM, 11:00 AM, & 5:00 PM

### *The Baptism of the Lord*

Vigil: Saturday, January 9, 2016 ~ 5:00 PM

Sunday, January 10, 2016

7:30 AM, 9:00 AM, 11:00 AM, & 5:00 PM

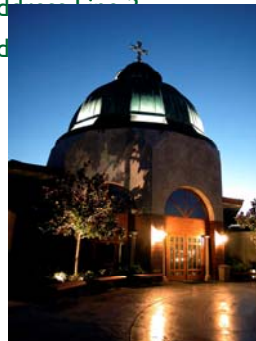
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