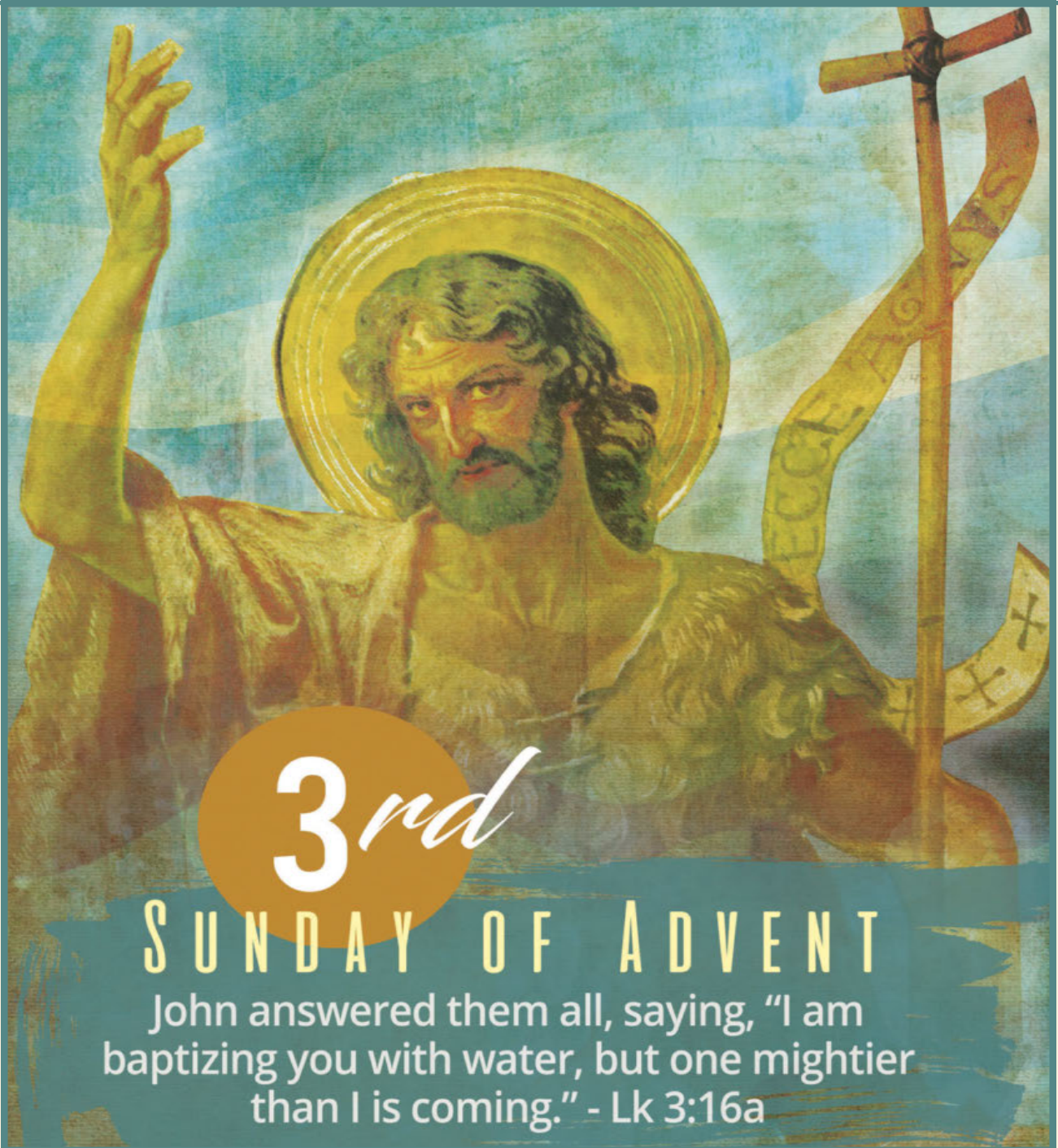




Saint Gregory the Great Catholic Church



3rd

SUNDAY OF ADVENT

John answered them all, saying, "I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is coming." - Lk 3:16a

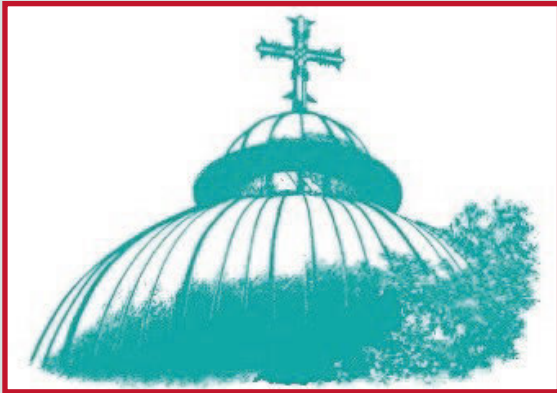
Very Rev. Nicholas P. Clavin, Pastor

Presiders: Msgr. Michael Gallagher and Rev. James Rafferty

Deacons: Dcn Ron Diem, Dcn Doug Pingel, and Dcn Dom Guzzardo

December 12, 2021

11451 Blue Cypress Dr., San Diego, CA 92131 • 858-653-3540 • www.stgg.org



We are a vibrant, faithful, Eucharistic, Catholic Community who bring people to Christ and send them out to transform the world.

MASS SCHEDULE

Weekday Mass Daily: 8:00 a.m.

Reconciliation: Saturday: 4:00 p.m.

First Friday Mass: Noon

Weekend Mass Schedule:

Saturday: 5:00 p.m.

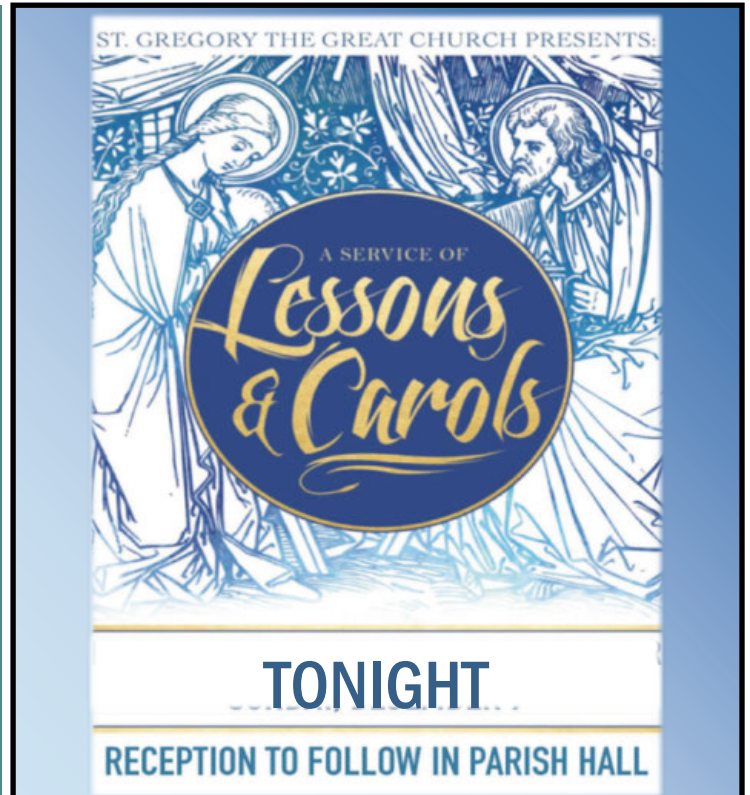
Sunday: 7:30 a.m.

Sunday: 9:00 a.m. (*Signed for the deaf*)

Sunday: 11:00 a.m.

Sunday: 5:00 p.m.

All Masses are livestreamed at:
www.stgg.org



Christmas Flowers

In this season of Advent, make a donation for Advent and Christmas flowers in memory, or in honor of, a loved one.

Your name and the name of your loved one will be published in the bulletin during the Advent season.

Thank you for your generosity!
www.stgg.org

Saturday, Dec 11
 5:00 pm Chony Sanchez †

Sunday Dec 12
 7:30 am Mass for the People †
 9:00 am Joan Doyle †
 11:00 am Maria and Tam Vu †
 5:00 pm Caridad Tombado †

Monday, Dec 13
 8:00am Carmen Gomez †

Tuesday, Dec 14
 8:00 am Arsenia Tantoco SI

Wednesday, Dec 15
 8:00 am Benigno Guevarra †

Thursday, Dec 16
 8:00 am Donna Fallon †

Friday, Dec 17
 8:00 am Nelia Jardiniano †



The Faith Community and Staff of St. Gregory the Great extend a warm welcome to our newest parishioners and their families:

Matthew Kuhr and Francine Vasquez
Marco Ayala and Silvia Santillan
Hien Trinh and Evelyne Vutien
Katelyn Tebou

New? Sign up: www.stgg.org

IN MEMORIAM

The Community and Staff of St. Gregory the Great Parish extend our heartfelt condolences to the families of:

James Pellerino
Jennifer Clowes
Muriel Tozzi

May they rest in God's eternal peace

FOR THE NEEDS AND INTENTIONS OF:

Cristela Tan, Remy Yuching, Ron Marcoux, Editha Kangleon, Bishop McElroy, Betty Kelly, Linda Hamabe, Shannon Peterman, Dianne Nugent, Nancy Hara, Cindy Sittmann, Margaret Lynn, Robert Kokoles, Carmen Morrissey, Alice Myers, Sandra Sangab, Bob Rivello, David Kremp, Hemi Shin, Veronica Lopez, Sue Ericson, Amy Rodenbeck, David LeMay, Mary Ann Stefanic, Judith DiMatteo, Gloria Galvan, James O'Keefe, Mara Casas, Alex Rubio, Russell Mars, Felicidad Floresca, Danny Wagner, Robert Scigliano, Ha Bich Tran, Alex Bernabe, Kathy Cazin, Adam Pavan, Chip Lindgren, Valerie DelaPena, Peter Kremp, Emilio Sales, Stephanie Miller, John Vattuone, Roger Stevens, Dave Nelson, Jeffrey Tara, Rowena Gabriel, Rudy Sigarlaki, Laurel Ayres, Shelley Wilson-Smith, Linda Drabek, Corazon Valera, Maggie Delaney, Rick Igou, Karin Baker, Jay Janssen, Norma Trujillo, Emily Hempton, Skip Anderson, Alex Borja, Alfredo Garrido, Myrna Gloria, Jayden James Valera, Thai Tran, Maria Scigliano, Armando Camacho

God, please bring healing, body and soul to our loved ones.



**DON'T MISS OUT ON
ADVENT CONFESSION
OPPORTUNITIES AT ST.
GREGORY THE GREAT**

PLEASE CHOOSE FROM THE
FOLLOWING DATES:

Dec 16th (Confessions begin at 8:30 a.m.)

Dec 18th (Confessions begin at 4 p.m.)

There will be 2 priests to hear Confessions

PARISHES NEARBY WITH EVENING
PENANCE SERVICES:

St. Gabriel December 14th 6:30 p.m.

Good Shepherd December 15th 7 p.m.

St. Michaels December 21st 7 p.m.

"confess your sins to one another
and pray for one another, that you
may be healed." - James 5:16

O, Come Let Us Adore Him
Christmas Mass Schedule

Christmas Eve Mass Times:

Children's Choir 4:00 p.m.

Traditional Choir 6:00 p.m.

Youth Band 8:00 p.m.

Traditional Choir 10:00 p.m.

Christmas Day Mass Times:

Traditional Choir 7:30 a.m.

Traditional Choir 9:00 a.m.

Traditional Choir 11:00 a.m.



194 bags of
food and gift
cards were

donated for Thanksgiving to our Lady of
Angel families! We are grateful for our
parish's support and generosity!



**ARE YOU CONSIDERING GIVING
A YEAR END GIFT?**

St. Gregory the Great Parish

**and School would love to benefit from
any gift!**

**Did you know that by making a gift of your
appreciated securities, you can avoid
paying capital gains taxes that would
otherwise be due if you sold these assets?
In fact, contributions are deductible for tax
purposes. There is also the benefit of no
transaction fees or other costs, and the
full value of the sold securities benefit the
parish and school!**

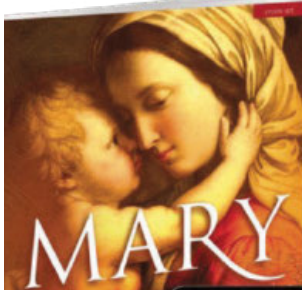
**THIS YEAR THE UPCOMING DEADLINE FOR
YOUR STOCKS AND ETF GIFTS IS WEDNESDAY,
DECEMBER 15TH, 2021**

**For more information on making a gift,
please visit the diocesan website at
www.sdatholic.org and click on Giving –
Stock Donations at the top of the screen.
Or, call Merrill Lynch, the diocesan broker,
at 800- 844-0720.**

Click the following links for further details:

[Ira Charitable Contribution Instructions](#)

[Stock Donation Instructions](#)



Mary: A Biblical Walk with the Blessed Mother

is a powerful Bible study that reveals

Mary's unique role in God's kingdom and our lives. You will experience the gospel through the eyes of Mary and get a vivid glimpse into her daily life. Seeing her in this way will lead you to a deeper relationship with the Blessed Mother and her son, Jesus.

From 1/10/2022- 2/28/2022

Time: 7:00-9:00 PM

To Register:

Call Dennis Poirier (858) 243-2455

www.stgg.org

Hebrews: The New and Eternal Covenant

Embark on a guided tour of the "Holy of Holies" of biblical theology. It is steeped in truths that are foundational to our Catholic Faith. Its theological concepts can be difficult to unpack. It draws connections between the Old and New Testaments, the Liturgy, the Eucharist, the priesthood, and so much more. Understanding Hebrews will help us appreciate the astounding generosity of God.

From 1/10/2022- 2/28/2022

Time: 10-Noon

Call Dennis Poirier (858) 243-2455

www.stgg.org



Dec 13-19, 2021

Monday: Nm 24:2-7, 15-17a/Ps 25:4-5ab, 6 and 7bc, 8-9 [4]/Mt 21:23-27

Tuesday: Zep 3:1-2, 9-13/Ps 34:2-3, 6-7, 17-18, 19 and 23 [7a]/Mt 21:28-32

Wednesday: Is 45:6b-8, 18, 21c-25/Ps 85:9ab and 10, 11-12, 13-14 [Is 45:8]/Lk 7:18b-23

Thursday: Is 54:1-10/Ps 30:2 and 4, 5-6, 11-12a, and 13b [2a]/Lk 7:24-30

Friday: Gn 49:2, 8-10/Ps 72:1-2, 3-4ab, 7-8, 17 [cf. 7]/Mt 1:1-17

Saturday: Jer 23:5-8/Ps 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19 [cf. 7]/Mt 1:18-25

Next Sunday: Mi 5:1-4a/Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19 [4]/Heb 10:5-10/Lk 1:39-4

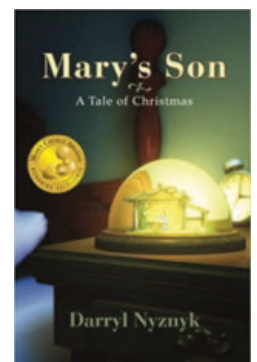
Parish Library

Need a great Catholic book?

Look no further than our own parish hall for many resources on a variety of topics!

Spiritual reading is a wonderful way to deepen our faith. If we had the chance, we would all love to talk to great saints like St. Anthony of Padua, St. Augustine, or St. Thomas Aquinas and get their advice on the spiritual life. While we cannot converse with them face-to-face, we do have the next best thing, their writings.

**December book: Mary's Son
by Darryl Nyznyk**



MEMORIAL BRICK SALE UPDATE:

More than 150 parishioners have placed their orders for celebrating and remembering their loved ones, both living and deceased! Some have crafted inscriptions simply to recall and re-live a special day in their lives, such as an important anniversary, a wedding, baptism or confirmation date, or the birth of a child. Still others have added available artwork to their bricks, such as US military insignia or religious symbols to enhance their inscriptions.

The last date to buy your brick on the plaza is this weekend! After that, you can access forms on the website or pick them up in the parish office. You may also email Kim Witham (withams@sbcglobal.net) or Mike Yang (001myang@gmail.com). Please drop completed forms and payments to the parish office, attention of Suzanne Guzzardo (reception@stgg.org) or mail them.

Once this batch of bricks is ordered and installed, the next opportunity to add bricks to the garden may not occur until 2023. Sales are closing soon so don't wait any longer to order yours! www.stgg.org



Please donate to the Retired Regional Fund today! The money collected helps aging religious who have graciously offered their lives in service. Your gift furnishes things like medications, nursing care costs, and much more.

EVERYDAY STEWARDSHIP RECOGNIZE GOD IN YOUR ORDINARY MOMENTS

The Well That Never Dries Up

Depending on how your mood is today, the words of Paul will hit you differently. “Rejoice always,” he tells us. Well, if your football team is poised to win this weekend or next, maybe you’re really feeling this vibe. But if you’ve got a long slog at work ahead of you this week and a to-do list that only seems to grow and never shrink, it may make you grumble. “Rejoice always? Always? When I’m tired? Cranky? When I’m sick of doing and giving? Thanks, Paul. I’ll be sure to scribble that phrase on a Post-It and stick it to my dashboard for when some entitled punk inevitably cuts me off on tomorrow’s morning commute.”

When we feel this way, we know it’s time to head back to the well. Think of all the places in Scripture where God compares His love, His mercy, His salvation to water. And not just any water — living water, water that moves. God’s strength is not a stagnant puddle sure to evaporate and disappear. It’s water you can keep coming back to. It’s water that never dries up.

Which is good news for us, because we never stop failing to do what we should, never stop failing to feel the joy and the compassion and the selflessness we are called to. We need a source of living water if we are going to ‘rejoice always.’ To be everyday stewards, we need a well that never empties.

The fountain of salvation never dries up. There is always more there for us to draw from. It’s a sign of His commitment — so let us, in turn, be committed to Him.

— Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

STEWARDSHIP of TREASURE



Our Parishioners and visitors made a joyful return to the Lord in gratitude for the gifts they have received from God:

Dec 5, 2021

Church \$17,987.00

Online Giving \$23,210.05

Total: \$41,197.05

Approximate amount needed weekly:

\$36,000

Difference: \$+5,197.05

Sincere gratitude for your fidelity to your offertory of sacrificial giving in support of St. Gregory the Great Parish. Fr. Nick, Pastor

FOR HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH

DROP IN HOURS

WEDNESDAY 3:30-5:30

Surviving the Holidays Workshop:

Navigating the holidays if you are separated or divorced can be a challenge.

Join us on Saturday, Dec. 18 from 9:30AM - 11:30AM at the Pastoral Center

To RSVP, please email Janelle at jperegoy@sdcatholic.org...

Celebrate "All Stages of Life" in the 10th Annual San Diego Walk for Life!

Join Bishop McElroy and 2,000 faithful to stand up for life, on Saturday, January 15, 2022, 8:30 a.m. at Waterfront Park (Grape St. and Harbor Dr.), downtown San Diego. Bring your family and friends. www.sandiegowalkforlife.org

YOUNG ADULTS

Christmas Movie Night and Gift Exchange

Dec 21st 7pm



Need Marriage Help?

Sign up for the Jan 14 -16, 2022 Retrouvaille Weekend

Retrouvaille is a program designed to help struggling marriages regain their health.

<https://www.helpourmarriage-sandiego.org>



ADOPT A FAMILY STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM 2021

The Adopt-A-Family Stewardship Program provides an opportunity for St. Gregory the Great parishioners to share their gifts with those who are in need, through sponsoring families who may not otherwise be able to provide for their own families during the holiday season. Families from St. Gregory the Great who are having financial hardship are encouraged to apply.

How does the program work?

You can participate through the attached link below. It takes you to Sign-Up Genius to get started:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/5080848AEAC2DA20-adoptfamily>

We are continuing with the use of gift cards from Target and/or Walmart because it was quite successful last year and COVID is still a concern. We have been asked this year by our sister parish to provide equity in gift giving for the families. To accommodate this request, we are asking parishioners to purchase \$25 gift cards to Target and/or Walmart. **Each person will receive 1 gift card.** We will happily accept as many gift cards as you wish to donate. The need is even greater this year due to the continued pandemic and subsequent increase in the cost of living.

DROP OFF YOUR GIFT CARDS TODAY IN THE PLAZA!

If you used Sign Up Genius, please put the gift cards in an envelope with the Family # and Family Name, e.g., "#1 Hernandez Family." If you'd rather submit a check or cash, please do so at the parish office. **Please make checks out to "St. Gregory the Great" and write "Adopt-A-Family" on the memo line.**

Thank you for your support, Sister Parish Outreach Ministry

The National Alliance on Mental Illness of San Diego, in collaboration with Saint Gregory the Great's Mental Health Ministry will host the next:



Family-to-Family Program:

Dates: Monday, January 24- March 28, 2022. Time 6:00- 8:30 PM

Classes will be held virtually using Zoom. However, if guidelines allow, we'll arrange for a few in-person meetings.

Please Note: This program is free, but you must register by clicking the link on Nami's website: [Calendar - NAMI San Diego](#). (Make sure to click the January 24, 2022, session)

~~This free eight-week course~~ is for family caregivers of individuals with mental illnesses. The curriculum focuses on schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, clinical depression, panic disorder, obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), borderline personality disorder, and posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Adoration	David Rowe	858-549-2215	Ministry of Mothers	Cynthia Kurose	858-859-0517
Altar Linens	Maria Quitugua	858-663-4135	Music Ministry	John Chicca	858-653-3583
Altar Servers	Greg Wisniew	619-922-1529	New Parishioner Orientation	Rich Abrom	858-603-9640
Audio-Visual Ministry	John Chicca	858-653-3583		Peggy Abrom	858-414-7629
Baptism Seminars	Jim & Paula Baker	858-653-3540			
	Tom & Joni Deiters	858-740-8965	Our Lady of Fatima Devotion	Carolyn Standifer	858-536-1113
Bible Study	Dennis Poirier	858-243-2455	Outreach for Nazareth Orphanage	Deborah Sampson	858-229-0345
Blood Drive	Alan Muir	858-695-1633		Father Brian Kelly	760-448-5462
Boy Scout Troup #616	Paul Honeycutt	858-692-1112	Parish Tours	Deacon Ron Diem	858-653-3582
Boy Scout Troup #664	Bill Boggs	858-530-9061	Prayer Wheel	Matt Gaynor	858-344-2165
Boy Scout Female Troup #226	Paula Trubitt	858-566-9231	Prayers & Squares	Margaret Lynn	858-530-2560
Build-A-Miracle	Chris & Julianne North	619-992-0845		Pat Kikendall	858-771-1167
Catholic Men's Fellowship	Frank Deniston	619-857-5473	RCIA	Deacon Dom Guzzardo	858-751-4785
Children's Liturgy of the Word	Maddie Hoeger	858-653-3594	Relevant Radio	Greg Lettau	858-663-6978
	Bella Luna	858-653-3594	Respect for Life / Social Justice	Maria Manyari	858-549-2812
Communion to the Homebound	Paulette Deniston	619-857-5443	Rosary Cenacle	MaryAnne Dunlop	858-880-2265
Computer Help Ministry	Michael Yang	619-607-0875	Rosary Makers	Mary Ann Quinto	619-252-7874
Confirmation Preparation-Adult	Dcn Doug Pingel	559-731-9791	STGG Food Share	Joe Klobberdanz	858-449-6246
Confirmation Preparation-Youth	Vinny Kyamko-Yap	858-653-3591	Sister Parish Outreach	Angie McAllister	858-395-5916
Connection to Christ Small Groups	Deacon Ron Diem	858-653-3582		Bill McAllister	858-790-4068
Cooking Group	Margaret Byrne	858-549-3375	Special Needs Ministry	Erin Zwahlen	619-540-0676
Cub Scouts	Stephanie Karpow	858-776-2808	St. Vincent/Meals for Homeless	Margie Mills	619-733-7410
Cursillo	Frank & Paulette Deniston	619-857-5473	Vacation Bible School	Maddie Hoeger	858-653-3594
Daily Mass Ministry	Jenny Quimpo	619-972-9719		Bella Luna	858-653-3594
Divine Dining	Mark & Gail Russell	619-972-1457	Wedding Ministry	Judy Roitz	858-653-3584
Divine Mercy Cenacle	Zofia Piastowska	858-547-0052	Women's Book Club	Kate Schemensky	858-748-5227
	Carolyn Standifer	858-536-1113	Women's Friendship Circle	Debbie Malone	858-663-5230
Donuts & Coffee	Kim Witham	619-508-1999		Pam Klevesahl	858-748-7733
Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist	Greg Tom	858-271-9490	Young Adult Ministry	Maddie Hoeger	858-653-3594
Faith Formation-Adult	Deacon Ron Diem	858-653-3582	Youth Ministry	Vinny Kyamko-Yap	858-653-3591
Faith Formation-Children	Maddie Hoeger	858-653-3594			
	Bella Luna	858-653-3594			
Faith Formation-Middle School	Maddie Hoeger	858-653-3594			
	Bella Luna	858-653-3594			
Family Cancer Support	Megan Clark	773-405-7151			
	Mary Brewer	858-395-2547			
Filipino-American	Hermie Moscoso	858-586-7473			
Film Fans	Kate Schemensky	858-748-5227			
Gala	Brie Atwater	858-342-7484			
Gardening Ministry	Mike Yang	619-607-0875			
Greeters & Ushers	John Brown	858-525-5710			
Health & Safety Ministry	Linda Mulvain	858-248-0040			
Helping Hands	Margaret Byrne	858-549-3375			
Kitchen Coordinator	Pat Rasmussen	858-774-8381			
Knights of Columbus	James Gilb	858-229-4822			
Lector	Rene Trevino	858-602-6437			
	Terry McKearney	619-822-3568			
Liturgical Environment:	Eric Thunberg	619-813-8477			
	Christine Thunberg	619-813-8478			
Liturgical Scheduling	Greg Tom	858-271-9490			
Marriage Encounter	Parish Office	858-653-3540			
Martha's Ministry	Caroline Yandell	858-653-3540			
Military Friendship & Support	Ryan Lawrenz	850-384-3269			
	Kelli Lawrenz	850-384-2660			
	Christopher Keane	858-382-1887			
Ministry of Consolation	Judy Riotz	858-653-3584			
Ministry Fair	Bill Carpenter	858-922-8860			
	Maureen Carpenter	858-922-8860			

PASTORAL STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL

PSC Chief Stewards

Pastor	Very Rev. Nicholas Clavin	858-653-3540
Deacon	Ron Diem	858-653-3582
Chief Steward	Michael Kielty	858-271-1004
Financial Council	Gene Fantano	858-335-2253
Parish Development	Maria Sittmann	619-846-4706
Communications	Rob Thornhill	858-679-0407
Catholic School	Maeve O'Connell	858-397-1290
Christian Formation	Ken Marra	858-442-3871
Groups & Organizations	Marla Garvey	858-689-8449
Liturgy	Cheryl Magner	858-271-7250
	Greg Tom	858-271-9490
Parish Life	Matt Gaynor	858-344-2165
Parish Outreach	Mike Harris	858-513-1153
	Chris Villasenor	858-382-9405
Parish-wide Involvement	Bill Carpenter	858-922-8860
	Maureen Carpenter	858-922-8860
Stewardship/Webmaster	Nichol Swift	858-653-3546



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Very Rev. Nicholas Clavin, *Pastor*

858 653-3540 • slower@stgg.org

Deacon Ron Diem, *Adult Formation Coordinator*

858 653-3582 • deaconron@stgg.org

Deacon Doug Pingel *Adult Confirmation Coordinator*

559-731-9791 DougjPingel@gmail.com

Deacon Dom Guzzardo, *RCIA Coordinator*

858-751-4785 deacondom@stgg.org

Maeve O'Connell, *School Principal*

858-397-1290 • office@stggcs.org

Business Manager

858-653-3540 •

Nichol Swift, *Stewardship Coordinator, Webmaster*

858-653-3546 • nswift@stgg.org

Judy Roitz, *Baptisms, Funerals, Weddings and Scheduling*

wedding@stgg.org

858-653-3584 • judy@stgg.org

John Chicca, *Music Director*

858-653-3583 • musicministry@stgg.org

Maddie Hoeger, *Young Adult Coordinator*

Maddie@stgg.org

Maddie Hoeger, *Faith Formation Coordinator:*

858-653-3594 ff@stgg.org

Bella Luna, *Faith Formation*

858-653-3540 ff@stgg.org

José Barrera, Anna Diaz, Maria Munoz, *Maintenance*

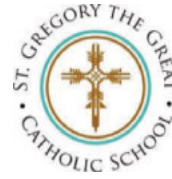
858 653-3540 • jrba378@gmail.com

Vincent Kyamka-Yap, *Youth Ministry Coordinator:*

858-653-3591 vinny@stgg.org

Suzanne Guzzardo, *Reception*

858-653-3540 • reception@stgg.org



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Maeve O'Connell, *Principal*

858-397-1290 • office@stggcs.org

Darlene Howard, *Assistant Principal*

www.stggcs.org

Becky Walton, *School Office Manager*

Melissa Fugitt, *Kindergarten*

Michelle Langley, *Kindergarten*

Cynthia Herman, *First Grade*

Nicole Demirbey, *Second Grade*

Jacqueline Renteria, *Third Grade*

Christina Defensor *Fourth Grade*

Camille Girard, *Fifth Grade*

Austin Simpson, *6th Grade / Jr. High History*

Melissa Colombo, *7th Grade / Jr. High ELA*

Darlene Howard, *8th Grade / Jr. High Math*

Sudipta Dasgupta, *Jr. High Science*

Kelli Lawrenz, *Jr. High Religion / Volunteer Cord*

Daniel Cavar, *P.E.*

Amy Igou, *Pre-School Director*

858-397-1291

Pre -School Classes:

2 Yr Old Teachers: Erica Howland, Casey Sanchioli

3 Yr Old Teachers: Elsa Chira, Irene Yutadco

4 Yr Old, TK Teachers: Melanie Bruce, Sanae Vaughan

Instructional Aides: Debbi Howard, Angela Sloskey, Cynthia Angeles, Daniel Lee

Extd Daycare Program: **Director:** Debbi Howard
Assistant: Noemi Palihnich

Custodian: Bert Meza



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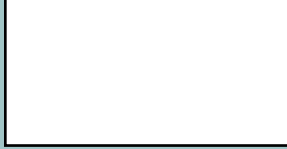
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Stewardship

Inspiring a deeper understanding of true giving

December 2021

It is an old Chinese custom that near the end of the year a man would make every effort to pay all of his past debts, in order that he might begin the new year with a clean slate, owing no one. To us, “near the end of the year” means the Christmas season, and it is more often than not a time of running up new bills rather than paying old ones. We buy toys for the children; gifts for friends and relatives.

We often invest in a major purchase for the family, a flat-screen TV or a larger refrigerator, and take on new payments for another 24 to 36 months. This is our custom in the season of giving.

We give to those we love to express our love, on the birthday of the one who taught us what love is all about. This is the principle involved. But, too often, gift giving becomes an end in itself, a custom without meaning, a distraction, a Santa Claus thing, and we lose sight of Love with a capital L. We forget about God! All year we have been giving to God. We have given out of a feeling of love and gratitude. The end of the year is an excellent time to re-appraise our giving to God.

Why not adopt the old Chinese custom? Let us assume our obligation to re-pay God, in light of all that God has given us. And, in the spirit of our Lord’s birthday, let us see what gift of self we can give out of our love. We know by now what our annual income is or will be from all sources, including possible gifts and bonuses. We know, too, how much we have given to God, both through the church and through worthy charities other than the church.

Does the amount I am giving truly represent what I think of Almighty God? Does it represent my love, my gratitude, my repentance, my acts of self-denial, my crosses and joys? Does it represent an acceptable share of my material goods?

Am I pleased with what I am giving? Is God pleased? Can I say I have sincerely given to the best of my ability?

Let us be generous with gifts we can give to others: Time, Good Example, Acceptance, Seeing the Best in People, Self-esteem, Self-disclosure, Helping Someone Learn Something New, Listening, Fun, Letting Others Give to You.



In this season of giving, we should take time to re-appraise what we have offered God this year. Let’s use tithing as a measure, an acceptable standard, and determine now if our gift of love is worthy of us. ☩



Gift of the Magi

Have you ever noticed the people who return to God a truly grateful portion of their income, in thanksgiving for all the blessings that God gives them, seem almost always to be happy or content?

The reason why is illustrated beautifully in O. Henry's famous Christmas story, "The Gift of the Magi," in which the husband and wife each sacrifice their most precious possession for the sake of the other.

The wife sells her beautiful hair to buy her husband a watch fob, while he sells his watch to buy her an expensive comb.

Each gift, then, is materially useless; but the couple is exuberantly happy because they realize that each one's gift represents an act of truly unselfish love.


Our gift of money to God represents our love for him; and when we sacrifice, or give of ourselves, we more fully appreciate the many blessings God has bestowed upon us. It is this

appreciation, this feeling of love and trust, that shows in the person who returns to God the first portion.

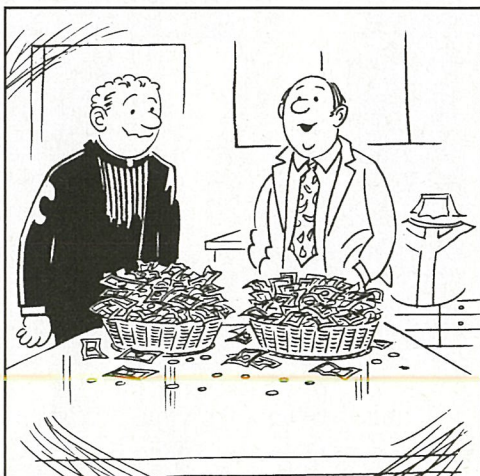
Think of the different things in life that make you happy: an entertaining motion picture, for example, a good book, a child uttering its first words, a birthday celebration, or a wedding. These occasions give us joy because we project ourselves into them or become a part of them.

The experience of sacrificial giving is much like this, but with one tremendous difference. Material pleasures are temporary. Giving is permanent. The giver's joy does not end with the last chapter of the book or the final scene of the movie. It stimulates a lasting joy because the good steward constantly gives of himself in deep appreciation of what God has given them.

We realize that the joy of sacrificial giving then is love. In spite of trial and tribulation, love emerges as the factor in the individual's happiness

It is the inner glow that distinguishes those people who become good stewards of their money from others. It is the joy of sacrificial giving. 

Monetary gifts to God teach us patience and prudence. We learn how to control our inordinate wishing for many things that we buy. This discipline of our will makes it easier for us to live God's law. Therefore giving definitely helps us to do God's will.



"It was a stroke of genius Reverend, asking them each to give the price of a movie!"

The Good Steward

One bleak Christmas Eve many years ago, a Yale student, spending his vacation in settlement work in the lower end of New York City, found a German widow woman in a cheerless attic tenement with three little daughters that all had typhoid fever, without fuel or food or medical attention. He got fuel and made a fire, brought food and a doctor. One of the children died; the other two recovered. The woman came to the Neighborhood House, then to the church, then to Christ. Hearing of the famine in India, she made up her mind to show her gratitude by taking up the support of one or more Indian famine waifs in memory of the little girl whom she had lost. She was earning her living and supporting her family by scrubbing floors at night in a great office building in the neighborhood.


“Yes” to Something Better

Just saying “No” to temptation isn’t usually easy by itself. In resisting temptation, we need to say “Yes” to something better, such as good stewardship in all areas of life.

Tempted to eat or drink too much? Say, “Yes,” to better health and good nutrition. Tempted to run up credit card debt? Say, “Yes,” to living within your means and your budget.

If you’re tempted to be selfish, say, “Yes” to sharing God’s gifts to you with others and finding the joy that it brings. Tempted to be lazy? Say, “Yes,” to being a giver and using your time and unique talents wisely. Tempted to pass on gossip? Say, “Yes,” to speaking


Out of her hard earned wages, she began to set aside a dollar and a half a week, and found that she was able to take care of four famine waifs. She also began to interest herself in those about her neighborhood who were in poorer circumstances than herself.

On the following Christmas Eve, when I went to the new rooms to which she had moved from her attic tenement, I found that she had papered them with her own hands and had put in a baby organ that the children were learning to play. She gathered together a group of poor children for a Christmas party and got her fellow scrubwomen to join in providing for the treat. Out of the newborn love of her Savior, she soon had learned the great lesson of Christian giving. 

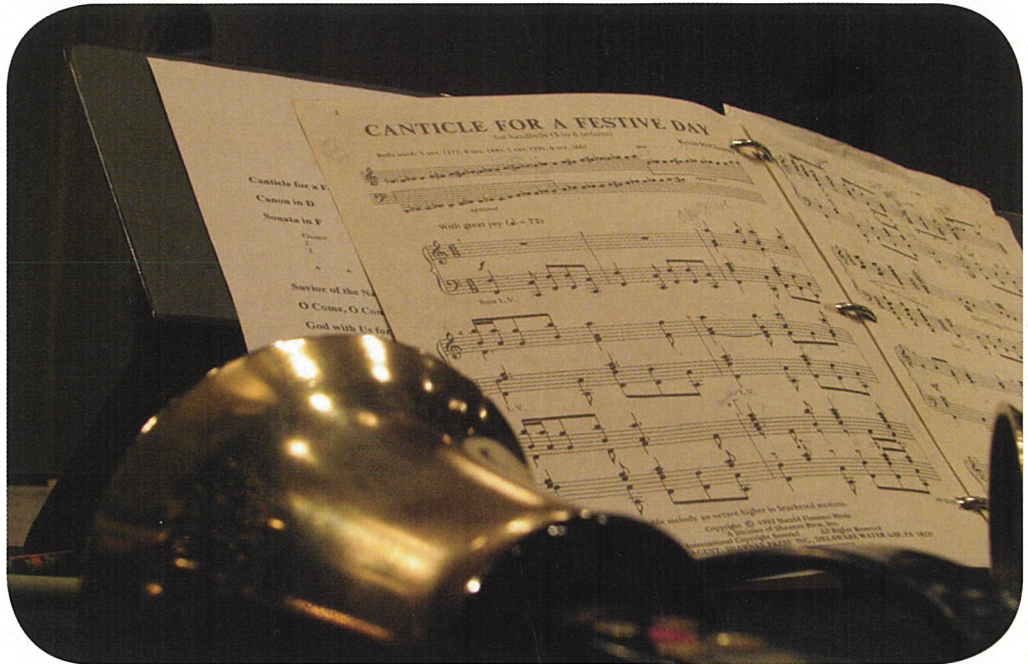


about others in the way you wish they would speak about you. Tempted by an “ego trip”? Say “Yes,” to putting God first.



Jesus too was tempted. But in saying, “No,” to each temptation, Jesus said, “Yes,” to something much better. 

God is a great giver. We can never out-give God. When we share what we have generously, God blesses us with priceless gifts. Peace, health, happiness and satisfaction, courage can never be purchased. They are the rewards of proper investments.



Live music fascinates me. Unable to play myself, I become enrapt watching a great artist infuse music with emotion while mastering the correct notes in perfect timing. A great performance moves me.

It can teach us about stewardship too! This is especially true in watching a hand bell choir perform. The transcendence of the music and the message of stewardship are unmistakable: we have a note to play in the beautiful music of Christian community. Notice the similarities:

- **Individuality** Each ringer is independent, but inextricably a member of the group. All are needed, no one is left out.
- **Distinction** Each individual's contribution is distinct as the highs and lows of the notes are struck. Our God-created uniqueness shines forth.
- **Choir** An individual cannot make music alone. Only together is harmony created.
- **Importance** Every single ringer is vital. No one is more or less important than another.
- **Togetherness** The group must move together as a whole or the music doesn't ring out.
- **Faction** In some pieces, a subset of ringers moves in another direction, but always returns bringing resolution to the musical tension.
- **Direction** To achieve unity, the group needs direction. A visionary director brings out the best in everyone.
- **Choir and Director** It's tempting to think that the director is everything. But without the choir, the director accomplishes nothing.

Call it the musical parable of stewardship: God directs a choir resounding to use our time, talent, and treasure to bring about his Kingdom. 