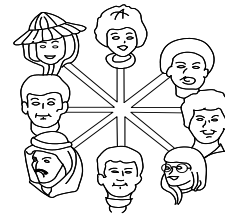


Accent on Ascension



Volume XXII, Issue 1

12033 Miller Ave. Saratoga CA 95070

Jan/Feb. 2012



Lenten Information



Ash Wednesday (February 22, 2012)

Two elements especially characteristic of Lent should be emphasized: the recalling of Baptism, or preparation of it, and Penance. In this way the Church prepares the faithful to celebrate the Paschal Mystery and the feast of the Resurrection.

During Lent penance should not only be internal but also external and social. Prayer for conversion and reconciliation in and with the Church should be encouraged.

Abstinence

Abstinence from eating meat is to be observed on Ash Wednesday and all Fridays during Lent. All persons are bound by the law of the Church to abstain after their 14th birthday.

Fasting

The Church's law of fasting is binding on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. The law of fasting obliges from the day after one's 18th birthday until the day after one's 59th birthday.

Fasting means that one full meatless meal per day may be eaten. Two other meatless meals may be taken sufficient to maintain strength, but together they should not equal a full meal. Liquids, including milk and fruit juice, may be taken between meals. If health or ability to work are affected, fasting does not oblige. Private, self-imposed observance of fasting on all week days of Lent is strongly recommended. Pastors and parents are to see to it that children who are not bound by the laws of fast and abstinence are educated in an authentic sense of penance, conversion and reconciliation.

Lenten Observance

As is traditional, increased opportunity to participate in the Eucharistic Liturgy, and in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, should be provided. Other devotions, such as Stations of the Cross, vigils and prayer services are encouraged. The traditional private practices of increased prayer, Scripture reading, Stations of the Cross, spiritual reading, alms, personal self-denial in food and drink, increased care and service to the sick and the needy are suggested.



Ash Wednesday

Mass and Blessing of Ashes, Wednesday, February 22, 9:00 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Lenten Stations of the Cross

Every Friday of Lent, 5:00 p.m.

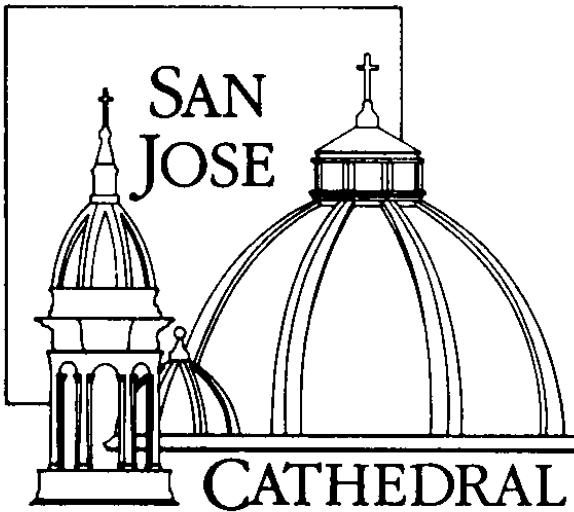
Additional Confession Times During Lent:

Thursday, March 22, 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Thursday, March 29, 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Thursday, April 3, 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

...and every Saturday throughout the year 4:00 p.m. to 4:45 p.m.



Dear Friends,

I write to you concerning an alarming and serious matter that negatively impacts the Church in the United States directly, and that strikes at the fundamental right to religious liberty for all citizens of any faith. The federal government, which we profess to be "of, by, and for the people," has just dealt a heavy blow to almost a quarter of those people—the Catholic population of the United States—and to the millions more who are served by the Catholic Church.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recently announced that almost all employers, including Catholic employers, will be forced to offer their employees health coverage that includes sterilization, abortion-inducing drugs, and contraception. Almost all health insurers will be forced to include those "benefits" in the health policies they write. And almost all individuals will be forced to buy that coverage as a part of their policies.

In so ruling, the Administration has cast aside the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, denying to Catholics our Nation's first and most fundamental freedom, that of religious liberty. And as a result, unless this rule is overturned, we Catholics will be compelled either to violate our consciences, or to drop health coverage for our employees (and suffer the penalties for doing so), which is also unconscionable. The Administration's sole concession was to give our institutions one year to comply.

We cannot comply with this unjust law. People of faith cannot be made second class citizens. We are already joined by our brothers and sisters of all faiths and many others of good will in this important effort to regain our religious freedom. Our parents and grandparents and this generation's immigrants did not come to these shores to help build America's cities and

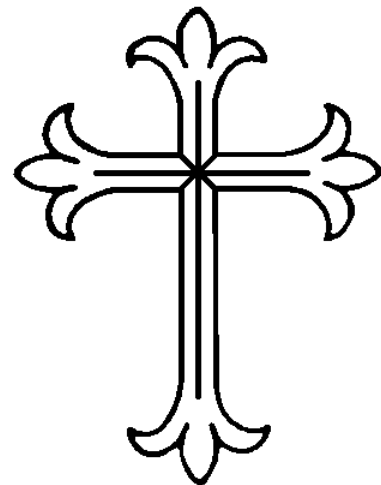
towns, its infrastructure and institutions, its enterprise and culture, only to have their posterity stripped of their God-given rights.

In generations past, the Church has always been able to count on the faithful to stand up and protect her sacred rights and duties. I hope and trust she can count on this generation of Catholics to do the same. Our children and grandchildren deserve nothing less. For these reasons, I would ask two things of you. First, as a community of faith we must commit ourselves to prayer and fasting that wisdom and justice may prevail, and religious liberty may be restored. Without God, we can do nothing; with God, nothing is impossible. Second, I would also recommend and ask you to visit www.usccb.org/conscience <<http://cl.exct.net/?qs=d3ad0983600843c19a629d686bfe6903df65211834ecfbc1a2475f7f61a8ad5c>>, to learn more about this severe assault on religious liberty, and how to contact Congress in support of legislation that would reverse the Administration's decision.

Please join me in taking this action as soon as you can, indeed in the very near future. I pray God's blessings upon you, your families and your loved ones, even as we renew our pursuit of the God-given gifts of freedom that we always pursue.

With every best wish and kind regard, I remain,
Sincerely Yours,

Patrick J. McGrath
Bishop of San Jose



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Council Communiqué Your Parish Council at Work

from Gary Auclair

Just how does your Pastoral Council operate? Ascension has a Constitution and By-Laws document to provide guidance. The Pastoral Council consists of ten members including the pastor, who meet monthly (except for a summer recess), usually on the third Thursday of the month at 7 PM in the Parish Office.

Prior to each meeting, an agenda is prepared and emailed to every member. Every meeting begins with a prayer. Then the minutes from the previous meeting are reviewed, corrected if necessary, and approved. Then, in order, each agenda topic is discussed. For the January meeting, these included:

Parish Communications – the status of the parish email system, the newsletter, and the website.

Status of Recruiting for Ministries and Pulpit Talks – a review of the ministry pulpit talks done in 2011; what talks are still to be done and who is responsible; are there any other talks we should schedule (yes there are).

- Status of Document Electronic Archiving – all documents from the Pastoral Council and Finance Council will now be electronically archived on the parish server at the Parish Office, eliminating paper-based storage. The procedure was reviewed and approved. The status of retroactively submitting the past two fiscal years of documents was reviewed (about half done).
- Status of Remodel Steering Committee – the status of the church remodeling effort was briefly discussed.

There are two final agenda items which always included. One is the Pastor's Report, in which Fr. Joe summarizes for the Council various activi-

ties in the parish and Diocese (such as holiday church schedule, focus of the next newsletter, ADA plans, planned special mailers or activities, financial status, etc.). And the last agenda item is Round the Table, where each Council member can bring up a topic for discussion. This is followed by a closing prayer and adjournment.

Contacting the Pastoral Council. If you have any comments, questions, or suggestions, consider attending a Parish Council meeting, or contact a member of the Council and let your voice be heard. Council members: Gary Auclair, Celine Benny, Orv Burley, Fr. Joe Galang, Chip Maloney, Manny Narcisa, Sonia Olivar, John Pozniak, Ron Schoengold and Harry Stice.



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ADA 2012

It is that time each year when all Catholics of the Diocese are invited to actively participate and join hands with one another in our Annual Diocesan Appeal (ADA). This is the yearly fund-raising drive of all parishes to support the programs and offices of the Diocese of San Jose of which we are part and from which we received many supportive services. The Theme of our Annual Diocesan Appeal for 2012 is, "Our Parish, Our Diocese, together in Christ".

Our parish assessment this year is \$84,405. To achieve our 2012 assessment we ask each family in the parish to make a pledge. If you have not participated in the past, we encourage you to join our ADA appeal now. We hope to increase the number of parishioners joining our ADA appeal in order to reach our goal. With the current recession, high unemployment, and the downturn in our economy, we ask you to do what you can. Thank you so very much for the sacrifice which your pledge represents.

Please bring your completed pledge card and turn it in at Mass. We thank you for your generosity and support in the many liturgies, programs, activities, and ministries of our parish. We look forward to your continued help for our parish and the Diocese. May our Lord reward you a hundredfold.



Men's Club

For the Men!

Tom Roza

The Men's Club extends an invitation to all men to attend a meeting and be our guest for a great meal. Meet many of your fellow Ascension parishioners and our club officers for 2012: President Tab Morales, Vice President Jim Scherffius, Secretary Tom Roza, and Treasurer Don van Buren.

Our Members Are Great Chefs

The regular meeting was held at Worner Hall on Friday January 13, 2012 and was led by new Men's Club President Tab Morales.

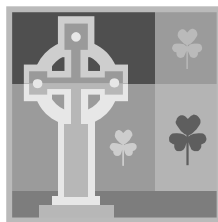


The Head Chef was Ron Schoengold who was ably assisted by Ted Wyess. Ron and his team provided the Men's Club members with a special Italian faire consisting of Chicken Catchatore, bread, and salad. This delicious meal was topped off with a desert consisting of ice cream bars, cookies and coffee. The meal was a huge success and enjoyed by all in attendance.

Upcoming Events!

St Patrick's Day Dinner

Mark your calendars for Saturday March 17 for the Men's Club's annual St Patrick's Day Dinner. As in past years, the menu will contain a wide variety of foods, appetizers, and a bar serving beer, wine, water, and soda. As part of the event will be a number of entertainment acts including the ever-popular group dancing led by our Pastor Fr Joe along with numerous door prizes. Advance tickets prices are \$15 for adults, and \$7 for children ages 5-12. Ticket prices sold at the door the night of the event are: \$18 for adults and \$9 for children ages 5-12. As usual,



children under 5 get in free. Tickets can be purchased after all weekend masses or at the Church office. We anticipate a sellout for this event so be sure to get your tickets early.



Come Join Us

The next meeting of the Ascension Men's Club will be held on Friday February 10, 2012 at 6:00pm. Join us for plenty of good food and camaraderie. We welcome both Ascension parishioners and non-parishioners to become members of our great Men's Club.



HELP ONE CHILD Sends Thanks and Appreciation!

Our heartfelt thanks to our Giving Tree Donors at Church of the Ascension who made dreams come true by purchasing a special gift for over 160 foster children this year! And a special thanks to Russ Castronovo of CONNECT!

Your generosity is a priceless gift to our ministry and foster families!



Have a blessed 2012!

From the Staff of Help One Child
www.helponechild.org

Parish Notes



Parish Mission - Save the Date

February 13 - 16, 2012

Monday - Thursday

9:00 a.m. and 7:30 p.m.

Conducted by Fr. Michael Moore
St. Patrick Fathers

Theme: Trying to cope with letting go in order to find peace and Freedom in our own lives.

Mass and Four Reflections:

Day 1: Invitation to Come, See for Yourself and Run the Risk.

Day 2: The Liberating Effect and Joy of Letting Go.

Day 3: Do not Cling - The Easter Mystery in Our Lives.

Day 4: Letting Go of Our Images of God to Know His Love.

Young Adult Activities

Many Hands, One Spirit

Muchas Manos, Un Espiritu

Calling all young adults to come together and make a difference at the first ever diocesan young adult day of service: **Saturday, February 18 from 9:30am-6pm**

Join other young adults in preparing for the Lenten season by dedicating a day to serve the needs of our community through various local immersion projects. Our day of service will also include praise and worship, keynote presentation, group reflections and closing liturgy.

A strong advocate for social justice will be our keynote presenter. Save the date and invite other young adults to this special event.

Disciples Sports Softball

2012 Spring Season Sign-up is on...

For any of the above Young Adult Events in our diocese, please contact Doris Atkinson at ascensionya@sbcglobal.net for more information.

Spotlight Night!

Ballroom dance lessons on Fridays at Ascension! Dance Instructors, David Serrano & Tessie Lamigo teach mostly American style Ballroom Dances.



Schedule: February 10, 17, & 24 - Salsa
March 9, 23, & 30 - Hustle
7:00 - 8:30 p.m. - Instruction
8:30 - 10:00 p.m. - Open Dance

Suggested Donation (per class)

\$5 per person \$8 per couple

Donations raised will go to support various Church of the Ascension programs & medical supplies to the Philippines.

Questions? Contact Marie Maraschin at 408-218-2704 or mmaraschin@yahoo.com

Prayer for Vocations

God of Love,
You call us to live in your love
Through the grace of our baptism.

Bless us with the courage
To carry out the mission of Jesus.
Grant us open and generous hearts
To see the needs of others
And to respond with compassion.

May the Church be blest with women and men
Who are dedicated to you through marriage,
The single life, the diaconate, priesthood,
And the consecrated life.

It is in Christ and through Christ
That we offer ourselves to you now and forever.
Amen.

Check out the Ascension Web site:

<http://www.churchoftheascension.net>

and come back frequently, as we try to keep you up-to-date on parish events. This newsletter is available in pdf format for you to read or print in color, and each week's Sunday Bulletin is also available by the Friday preceding the weekend.



Finance Council

Finance Council Update

The next regular meetings of the Finance Council are scheduled for Monday, February 6 and Monday, March 12, both at 7:00 p.m. at the Parish Office.

Contacting the Finance Council

If you have any questions or comments, feel free to contact any of the members of the Finance Council: Fr. Joe Galang; Jeff Moe chairperson; Michele Chang, vice-chairperson; Marie Maraschin, secretary; members Marilyn Martin, Keegan Mendonca, and Arline Schoengold.

Income and Expenses – July through December 2011

Our positive income variance grew to almost \$9,000 by the end of December. This was due to generous Christmas donations from our parishioners and an increase in the ADA rebate (also due to generous contributions by parishioners during the 2011 ADA campaign).

Adding to the positive trend, expenses are below budget in virtually every category. Overall the actual expenses are \$218,101 compared with budgeted expenses of \$237,139 through December.

Looking Ahead and Other News

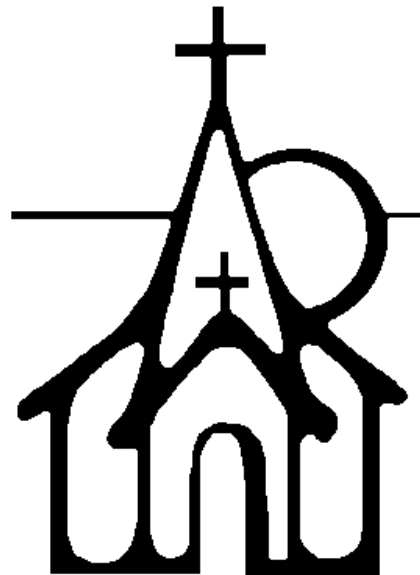
The outlook for the second half of the fiscal year continues to be positive although a few planned expenses should close the gap between the budget and actual expenses:

- Retirement and insurance expenses will hit in the second half of the year
- An investment in floor maintenance equipment for the parish center (\$1500) should extend the life of the floor by several years.

The tax documents (summarizing your donations) were mailed out to the parishioners recently. Contact the Parish office if you did not receive yours.

The 2012 ADA appeal will be starting in February. The budget is the same (\$84,405) as it has been for the past 2 years.

Regards,
Jeff Moe

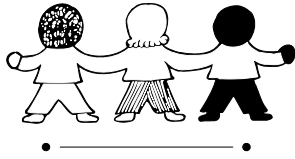


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The CONNECT Group is pleased to provide this update on the Faith in Action Rotating Shelter. For approximately 19 years, the Church of the Ascension housed up to 15 “guests” in Worner Hall in the month of August. In addition, during our month, we provided a hot dinner plus groceries for the guests to make breakfast and lunch. The guests were selected and supervised by West Valley Community Services (formerly Cupertino Community Services). Due to funding issues, West Valley Community Services closed the program when our “guests” left Worner Hall after staying with us in August 2010.

In November 2011, a new non-profit organization, Faith in Action Silicon Valley Rotating Shelter (“SV Rotating Shelter”), was created to provide shelter and other life-enhancing services to homeless men throughout Santa Clara County. Starting this August, we will once again be opening Worner Hall for up to 15 “guests.”

Faith in Action Silicon Valley Rotating Shelter is a collaborative among more than twenty churches, congregations and local community organizations that offers a ‘new beginning’ for recently homeless men. The goal is to provide a supportive shelter environment for members of the homeless community with a focus on providing guests an opportunity to establish a stable, self-sufficient lifestyle and obtain permanent housing.

“We will provide case management, shelter, meals, shower facilities, bus passes, job counseling, job development and other supportive services for homeless men who are willing and able to maintain employment and seek a permanent place to live,” said Nadine Hutchinson, case manager, and one of the paid staff of the SV Rotating Shelter. “With the support of the faith-based organizations and the community at-large we will be able to provide, and improve on, the supportive services needed to serve the individuals in our program.”

SV Rotating Shelter will move from one host church or synagogue to another each month. Each host site will provide adequate space for the guests to sleep, a secure area for them to store their belongings during the day and an area where they can have their meals. Volunteers from the host site and the collaboration of supporting organizations will provide dinners each night and groceries for the guests to make their own breakfasts and lunches. The shelter will open at 8:00 p.m. and close at 7:00 a.m. The guests and their personal belongings and supplies for the shelter will be moved from one host site to the next each month by a team of volunteers.

Participating host faith organizations include: Trinity Methodist of Sunnyvale; Beth David of Saratoga; St. Joseph’s Catholic Parish of Cupertino; Sunnyvale First Methodist, Church of the Ascension Parish of Saratoga; Good Samaritan Methodist Church of Cupertino; St. Thomas Episcopal Church of Sunnyvale; Sunnyvale Presbyterian Church. Community organizations that are involved include Cupertino Rotary, Kiwanis Club of DeAnza, Cupertino Optimists, Sunnyvale Rotary and Cupertino Grange.

Applicants will be carefully screened and must sign a contract which defines their responsibilities and rights within the program. The program will be limited to 15 guests who are “clean and sober”, employed or employable, who are allowed to stay for a period of up to 90 days, as long as they are in compliance with program requirements and making progress toward the goal of self-sufficiency and permanent housing. Shelter guests will receive extensive case management and significant support from the community.

“We believe that there is a distinct need for shelter and case management for homeless individuals in our community and want to re-establish this collaborative, relational program,” noted Pastor Steve Harrington, Sunnyvale Presbyterian. “The faith community is a natural resource to fulfill this need.”

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