

## The Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 20, 2009

Let the clouds rain down on the Just One!

## Prepare the Way of the Lord in Our Hearts

Dear Parishioners

Our patron keeps telling us: "Prepare the way of the Lord." The disciples of John the Baptist asked another question: "What should we do?" Most of us hear these challenging words and do nothing. I have a suggestion: When was the last time you went to confession? Most of us do not like confession. We do not like to accuse ourselves of our sins. But ignoring the reality of sin in our personal lives does not help us prepare the way of the Lord. We are all sinners. We can fool ourselves, but we cannot fool God.

Now here is the suggestion: on next Monday evening, Dec. 21 at 7:30 p.m., we will have a beautiful community penance service. I have invited six priests to help us. We will gather with our friends and neighbors and pray that our loving and gracious God will forgive all of our sins and mistakes. We need this forgiveness, and the penance service is a perfect time to prepare our bodies and souls to receive the Christ Child on Christmas Day. I really invite you to come on Monday and leave your sins at the foot of the cross. Try it. You'll like it.

Peace,  
Fr. John Maxwell

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The priests and staff of St. John's wish everyone a blessed Christmas and joyous New Year.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This column and all of Father John's previous columns are available on our parish Web site. Just go to [www.SaintJohnTheBaptistChurch.org](http://www.SaintJohnTheBaptistChurch.org) and click on the picture of the church.

# Mass for the Intentions Week

**December 19 – 26, 2009**

		<b>Intention</b>	<b>Requested By</b>
Saturday, Dec. 19	5 p.m.	Nick Bolla †	Gina Brusatori
Sunday, Dec. 20	8 a.m.	Jewell Boutte†	Joe Lewis
	9:30 a.m.	Anthony Echibe †	Chinwe Echibe
	11 a.m.	Larry Umeh †	Mike Anigbogu
	12:30 p.m.	Nnamdi Uche †	Uche Family
	6 p.m.	St. John's Parishioners	Brazilian Community
Monday, Dec. 21	8 a.m.	Tyler Vietti †	Ramon & Dory Briones
	6 p.m.	St. John's Parishioners	Simbang Gabi Sponsors
Tuesday, Dec. 22	8 a.m.	Maria Fatima Gregorio †	Mom & Dad
	7 p.m.	St. John's Parishioners	Simbang Gabi Sponsors
Wednesday, Dec. 23	8 a.m.	Bernardino & Gorgonia Juat †	Juat Family
	7 p.m.	St. John's Parishioners	Simbang Gabi Sponsors
Thursday, Dec. 24	8 a.m.	Sr. Mary Soong – Thanksgiving	Mary Huang
	6 p.m.	Elvira Greco †	Greco Family
	Midnight	St. John's Parishioners	St. John the Baptist Church
Friday, Dec. 25	8 a.m.	Peter Vietti †	Vietti Family
	9:30 a.m.	Russ Blair †	Blair Family
	11 a.m.	Marlon Smith	Mom & Dad
	12:30 p.m.	Leonor F. Tionson †	Uncle Benny & Aunt Perla
Saturday, Dec. 26	6 p.m.	St. John's Parishioners	Brazilian Community
	8 a.m.	Jack Warren †	Merv & Barbara Aguiar .
	5 p.m.	Charles H. Yancey Jr. †	Verdean & Robert Clements

## Stewardship

Envelopes & EFT (179)	\$3,851
Loose Donations	<u>1,546</u>
<b>Total Regular Collection</b>	<b>\$5,397</b>
Immaculate Conception	\$1,306
Religious Retirement	\$

**Please remember your parish in your will.**

## Message of Stewardship

The Gospel today tells of the Virgin Mary, pregnant herself, hurrying off to help her cousin Elizabeth. The model of good stewardship, she who had given herself to bear the Savior gave her time and love to others as well.



**Madeline Gaines**



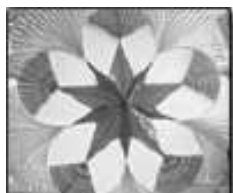
**Leonard Abesamis                      X'Avier Walker**

## Let Us Pray for the Sick:

Josephine Abbissinio, Dorothy Alexander, Evelyn Baker, Terry Barber, George Blair, Barbara Brendlinger, Elizabeth Brown, Jeffrey Chavez, Isabella Kristine Cruz, Deloris Davis, Lou Encalada, Narte Estrellas, Michael Fleming, Emilio Gallegos, Ann Gerletti, Irma Ghirlone, Teresa Grant, Domingos Gregorio, Frances Haynes, Margaret Hicks, Steve Jeffre, Eric Lubrano, Fr. John Maxwell, Deanie McGowan, Evelyn & John Miche, Bob Moore, Lolita Parafina, Stephen Pellingra, Evelyn Phillips, Dina Pieroni, Leola Richardson, Sr. Mary Soong, Jo Sudall and Marilyn Sutton.

Please call the rectory to add or remove names.

## Our Simbang Gabi Novena Continues Through Wednesday



Please join us in celebrating Simbang Gabi, our parish's Christmas novena, through Wednesday, Dec. 23. We are attending evening Mass, then enjoying a community meal in the Conference Room.

Parish groups, families and individuals are sponsoring each day of the novena. Please call Bernie Juat at 526-5828 or Zeny Miguel at 222-1375 if you would like to help sponsor a Mass.



<u>Date</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Partial List of Sponsors</u>
Dec. 19	Saturday	5 p.m.	5 p.m. Choir and Co Family
Dec. 20	Sunday	6 p.m.	St. John's Brazilian Community, together with Jabson, Vistan, Resetz, Speir and Domantay families
Dec. 21	Monday	6 p.m.	Lina & Patrick Conway (more welcome)
Dec. 22	Tuesday	7 p.m.	Christine Hickey, the Kellers and Linda Crittendon
Dec. 23	Wednesday	7 p.m.	San Lorenzo Group, Russ Irwin, Randall Family and Ruth Vietti

### **Charismatic Mass at Cathedral**

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal Office invites you to celebrate Jesus at a Charismatic Mass with Bishop Salvatore Cordileone from 2 to 4 p.m. on Saturday, Jan. 9, at the Cathedral of Christ the Light, 2121 Harrison St. in Oakland.

Plan to attend with your family prayer group and friends.

For a tour of the new cathedral prior to Mass, meet at the front door at 12:15 p.m. For tour reservations and number in your party, call (925) 828-6622 or e-mail [ccro@lafpdl.com](mailto:ccro@lafpdl.com).

There will be a pot luck after Mass in the parish hall (no desserts, please).

### **What's Happening at St. John's**

Daily through Dec. 23 – Simbang Gabi Parish Christmas novena (evening Mass and communal meal). See schedule above.

Monday, Dec. 21 – Communal Penance Service, 7:30 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 24 – Children's Christmas Mass; concert at 5:30 p.m., Mass at 6 p.m.

Thursday, Dec. 24 – Midnight Mass, preceded by Christmas concert at 11:30 p.m.

Friday, Dec. 25 – Christmas Masses same as Sunday (8, 9:30, 11 and 12:30).

Friday, Dec. 25 – Brazilian Christmas Mass at 6 p.m. with reception in Conference Room.

Thursday, Dec. 31 – New Year's Eve Mass at 7:30 p.m.

Friday, Jan. 1 – 11 a.m. New Year's Day Mass

Saturday, Feb. 13 – Cupid's Crab Feast, starting at 6 p.m. in school gym.

### **St. John's Seniors**

St. John the Baptist Community Center  
6500 Gladys St., corner of Lexington  
Director: Jan Duckart 527-2850  
Telephone 237-3808 on Tuesdays

Tuesday, Dec. 22:

Noon: Holiday Lunch

Center's 35th anniversary and  
Members' birthday celebration.

Sing-along with Ligia – Songs of the Season

### **Christmas Concert**

St. Mary Magdalen Church in Berkeley will offer a Christmas concert at 7 p.m. this Sunday, Dec. 20. Italian Baroque music will be sung by the Christmas Schola Cantoruma and played by a Christmas Consort of period instruments.

## **Fr. Ray Grateful for Support**

In the 22 years of my ministry here at St. John's, I have watched our parish community display – among other things – warmth, solidarity and ministerial service. And I truly believe that many of you deserve a good share of the credit.

This sense of community spirit was manifested during my 35th priestly anniversary.

I, therefore, am seizing this golden opportunity to express my profound gratitude to members of the African American Committee, Nigerian community and St. John's parishioners who sent me gifts, financial donations and cards, and everyone who brought food or drinks to the feast.

I am very grateful to the concelebrant priests, St. John's Multi-Cultural Choir, volunteers, helpers, decorators, friends, St. John's staff, photographers, the MC, DJ, video & slide operators, presenters, guests and everyone who contributed toward the success of the celebration.

The Mass was a rich spiritual experience, while the reception was nourishing and friendly.

I really appreciated your shared sentiments of joy, love and excitement that prevailed during my 35th anniversary.

May the Good Lord enrich every one of you.

– Fr. Ray Ogbemure

## **YLI Invites New Members**

Mother of Perpetual Help No. 159, YLI, is an organization of Catholic women dedicated to the Christian principle of charity and love. Their history reflects care for each other, and those in need.

YLI's spiritual culture and educational activities include support of a Golden Jubilee Burse for seminarians, scholarships, Perpetual Novena and aid to children in need . . . just to mention a few.

Women of our parish are invited to cultivate new friendship . . . to come and grow.

For further information, please contact Ann Jones at 232-2976.

## **Office Closed Next Saturday**

In observance of the holiday weekend, St. John's church office will be closed on Saturday, Dec. 26, for Christmas.

## **Advent Penance Services**

7:30 Monday, Dec. 21 – St. John the Baptist

7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 22 – St. Jerome

7 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 23 – St. David of Wales

At each church, there will be a short penitential service, then priests will be available to hear your confession, face-to-face or in the confessional.

## **Children's Christmas Eve Mass**

Our Children's Religious Education students are practicing for their performance of "The Nativity Story," which they will give at the Children's Christmas Eve Mass, this Thursday at 6 p.m.

A concert by St. John's Children's Choir will precede the Mass at 5:30 p.m.

## **Start the New Year With Mass**

To thank God for the blessings we have received this past year and honor Mary under her most ancient title as the "Mother of God," we will offer a special Mass at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Jan. 31, and two Masses on New Year's Day – at 8 a.m. and 11 a.m.

New Year's Day is a holy day of obligation this year.

## **Certificate in Social Ministry**

Registrations are now being accepted for a six-part, once a month, series of specialized workshops to develop leadership skills in social ministry, examine biblical foundations for justice and deepen awareness of Catholic social teaching.

Candidates for the advanced diocesan certificate meet on the Holy Names campus in Oakland from 9:30 a.m. to noon and 1 to 3:30 p.m. on Saturdays — Jan. 16, Feb. 13, March 13, April 24, May 8 and June 12.

Cost is \$20 per class day, or \$95 for all six courses. Various speakers are scheduled as instructors. Take one or all courses.

Please contact Sandra at [smartinez@oakdiocese.org](mailto:smartinez@oakdiocese.org) or 267-8371 to register. Space is limited. Visit [www.oakdiocese.org/pastoral](http://www.oakdiocese.org/pastoral) for more information.

# Thank You for Donating to Our Christmas Decorations

Thanks to our parish Decorating Committee and to everyone who donated to our Christmas flower fund for beautifying our church to help us celebrate the Feast of Our Lord's Nativity.

Mr. & Mrs. Dante Sales  
Paz Buenaflor  
Veronica Austin  
Benedicta Tyler  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Collins  
Mr. & Mrs. John Herron  
Barbarella Magloire  
Mr. & Mrs. John Olivero  
James Bellow  
Mr. & Mrs. Domingos Gergorio  
Bernardino Juat Jr.  
Anthony Delatorre  
Philip Moore  
Mr. & Mrs. Ned Pollard  
Frances Petska  
Mr. & Mrs. Bradley Shafer  
Carmelito Castillo  
Mr. & Mrs. Lyn Wilson  
Mr. & Mrs. Ernest Del Simone  
Mynette Theard  
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Lin  
Mr. & Mrs. Alfred Carlson  
Mr. & Mrs. Floyd Renty  
Mr. & Mrs. Fabio Franceschi  
Mr. & Mrs. Bruce Hartman  
Mr. & Mrs. John Huber  
Thomas Kennedy  
Zenaida Miguel  
Ruth Vietti  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Woldemar  
Mr. & Mrs. Virgil Alonzo  
Jose Freitas  
Mr. & Mrs. Frank Gardner  
Mr. & Mrs. John Randall



Bernice Stewart  
Ron Nelson  
Flory Del Rosario  
Mr. & Mrs. Mark Molinar  
Alice Barce  
Mr. & Mrs. Al Jones  
Mr. & Mrs. Robert Clements  
Angela Rapella  
Mr. & Mrs. Ramon Tan-Torres  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael Gorin  
Janet Ramirez  
Mr. & Mrs. Menardo Manuzon  
Mr. & Mrs. Dimitri Smith  
Gina Brusatori  
Mr. & Mrs. Ramon Briones  
Mr. & Mrs. Tom Hoffman  
Kathleen Klatt  
Margaret Palumbo  
Lorraine O'Leary  
Diane Marin  
Marsha Conwill  
Queen Sanders  
Mr. & Mrs. Arthur Chavez

Mr. & Mrs. Carlo Corpus  
Mary Dong  
Evelyn Baker  
Mr. & Mrs. Jack Sudall  
Mr. & Mrs. Manuel Catao  
Mr. & Mrs. Hayward Antoine  
Mr. & Mrs. Donald Davenport  
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Keller  
Elsa Abesamis  
Henry Williams  
Dinglasan Family  
Cynthia Webb-Beckford  
Mr. & Mrs. Stephen Allen  
Mr. & Mrs. Roberto Saldana  
Alexander Bricenio  
Megan Cortes  
Cora Tacotaco  
Mr. & Mrs. Walter Wong  
Mr. & Mrs. William Saner  
Irene Blair  
Michael Stokowski  
Mr. & Mrs. John McGovern  
Agnes Hampton  
Mr. & Mrs. Jessie Barrios  
Donald Barry  
Ruben Gutierrez  
Norma Patrick  
Jose Remo  
Mr. & Mrs. Ron Johnson  
Noreen Shaughnessy  
Mary Skerl  
Theresa Parella  
Lucille Peterson  
Mr. & Mrs. Reynaldo de los Reyes  
Mr. & Mrs. Hai Tu

## New Year's Retreat

The San Damiano Retreat Center will offer a New Year's Retreat, *Taste and See the Goodness of the Lord*, from Wednesday, Dec. 30 through Friday, Jan. 1.

Celebrate how we have noticed these words in our lives this past year and discover new ways to make these words more vital.

For details, see [www.sandamiano.org](http://www.sandamiano.org) or call (925) 837-9141.

## Concerts at Cathedral

Upcoming concerts at the Cathedral of Christ and Light in Oakland:

7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 6 – Three Cathedrals Choir Festival. General admission \$25, tickets available in the Cathedral Gift Shop.

8 p.m. Saturday, Jan. 23 – Head-Royce School Choir. Tickets available at the door, \$10 adults, \$5 students. Advance tickets available at [choir@headroyce.org](mailto:choir@headroyce.org).