

Church of the Ascension

ascensionsaratoga.org | 408-725-3939

Masses: (Sat) 5p; (Sun) 7a, 9a, 11a, 5p

(Mon-Fri) 8a; (Sat) 9a

Confessions: (Sat) 4p – 4:45p



February 16, 2025

Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jer 17:5-8 | 1 Cor 15:12, 16-20 | Lk 6:17, 20-26

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

“It is so good to be poor, to have nothing, to await all from God!” These sentiments of the humble French religious sister St. Jeanne Jugan sum up the spirit of Jesus’ words in today’s Gospel. Jesus praises poverty, hunger, sadness, and rejection, but certainly not as ends in themselves; God does not take pleasure in our suffering! He does use our suffering, however, to awaken us to our need for him. Poverty can spur us to pursue *heavenly* goods, and thus Jesus assures the poor, “the kingdom of God is yours.” Hunger can cause us to seek God who alone can truly satiate our desires, and thus Jesus says to the hungry, “you will be satisfied.” Those who weep will laugh, Jesus says – so long as their sadness inspires them to seek happiness in the service of God and the joys of eternal life. For all of us, no matter our means or our circumstances, today’s Gospel is a reminder to allow everything – including our difficulties, disappointments, and unfulfilled desires – to turn our hearts to God and rely on his loving care.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

It can be difficult to practice the spirit of the Beatitudes (as the “blessings” in today’s Gospel are called) in the moment. Suffering, distress, and confusion easily divert our attention from God as we attempt to “make the problem go away.” Sometimes we are even tempted to give up, to turn aside from God, and to seek consolation in other things. This is exactly the opposite of what he wants for us, and for good reason! God knows that it is best for us to always rely on him. This is why, as today’s first reading explains, the man who trusts in the Lord is secure – “like a tree planted beside the waters ... it fears not the heat when it comes” – and fruitful – “its leaves stay green.” For those who trust in the Lord, help comes from the all-powerful, infinitely loving Creator of the universe. When we entrust ourselves to him, we have nothing to fear.

ACCOMPANY

Is there someone in your life who is struggling with fear, loneliness, anxiety, or sadness? Take time to pray with that person and, together, try to discover God’s invitation to a deeper reliance on him in the midst of the distress. These moments of suffering are never occasions for us to get “preachy.” Instead, accompany your friend and be a reminder of the hope we have in God.

Courage Under Fire

They called him the “Scourge of Apartheid” and “Guardian of the Light.” Was he a Marvel superhero? Would you believe an archbishop? An Oblate of Mary Immaculate, Denis Hurley of Durban (1915-2004) opposed the racist regime of South Africa for 50 years, calling it “blasphemy” and “intrinsically evil” as first the world’s youngest bishop and later as the youngest archbishop. Hurley joined Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu and three others on the South African government’s “most wanted” list. Standing up for the truth may put us on a hit list. It also makes us blessed in God’s eyes. - *Preparetheword.com*

ABCs of Fostering Vocations - Part 3

Encourage your children to be involved in the liturgical life of the parish as servers, lectors, musicians, etc. (and see to it that they get there on time).

Find opportunities to affirm the gifts and talents of your children, and help them relate their gifts to various career and life choices (including priesthood and religious life).

(To be continued)

-USCCB.org

February: Month of the Holy Family

Pope John Paul II urged families to consider that, “the humble dwelling place in Nazareth is an authentic school of the Gospel. Here we admire, put into practice, the divine plan to make the family an intimate community of life and love; here we learn that every Christian family is called to be a small “domestic church” that must shine with the Gospel virtues. Recollection and prayer, mutual understanding and respect, personal discipline and community asceticism and a spirit of sacrifice, work and solidarity are typical features that make the family of Nazareth a model for every home.”

Parish Office...

Our office will be closed on Feb. 17, Presidents’ Day.

ADA Report

	Week 1	Week 2
Number of Pledges	22	38
Pledged Amount	\$20,100	\$32,350
Percent of Goal	26%	42%



Thank you to those who quickly responded. Have you made your ADA pledge? You can help *reach* and *surpass* our goal in a few weeks! Thank you for your support.

WEEKLY OFFERING - FEB. 9

-Total **\$6,351** (\$3,633 + online: \$2,718). Goal: \$6,500.

-YTD: **\$205,623**. Budget: \$208,000.

-Church in Latin America: **\$1,679**.

-Ascension Building Fund: **\$2,000** in Fr. Rey’s memory.

-Ascension Faith Formation Fund: **\$190**.

Thank you for your generous support.

MASS INTENTIONS

Feb 15	Sat	05 pm	Paul Lenarduzzi +
Feb 16	Sun	07 am	Josephine Gembala +
		09 am	Marietta Sokol +
		05 pm	Ron Stopnick +
Feb 17	Mon	08 am	The Gerrard Family
Feb 15	Sat	09 am	Crislucia Borromeo +

Pull Up a Chair

The Church celebrates a couple of feast days for buildings, but today (Feb. 22) is the only one dedicated to a piece of furniture—the “chair” of Peter. The chair, or *cathedra*, is a symbol of the pope’s authority, much like a “chairperson” has charge of a meeting. Peter and his successors, the popes, ensure the unity of the church. Because the pope is the “rock” of Matthew’s gospel, it is he who affirms what is believed. He holds the “keys to the kingdom” and guides the world in ways that lead to fulfillment. In the spirit of the church’s role as teacher, sit for a while with a recent encyclical (papalencyclicals.net). - *Takefiveforfaith.com*

Theological Virtue of Hope

Christian hope unfolds from the beginning of Jesus’ preaching in the proclamation of the beatitudes. The beatitudes raise our hope toward heaven as the new Promised Land; they trace the path that leads through the trials that await the disciples of Jesus. But through the merits of Jesus Christ and of his Passion, God keeps us in the “hope that does not disappoint” (Romans 5:5) - *Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 1820*



An Interior Pilgrimage in the Year of Hope, with Mary

Get away for a day... Journey along the path of faith...

Saturday, March 1, 2025 | 9:00 AM — 3:00 PM

Mount Saint Joseph Carmelite Monastery

12455 Clayton Rd, San Jose

Retreat Facilitator: Fr. Hao Dinh

Featured Speaker: Fr. Julius Ntalo, OCD, a Discalced Carmelite from Uganda.

Retreat includes time for featured talks, group discussions, reflections, and Holy Mass.

Registration Fee: \$50 per person (includes lunch) Register today, as space is limited: 30 seats are reserved for Ascension parishioner registrations until February 15; all other registrations from neighboring parishes are also welcome now until all remaining seats are filled. The last day to submit your completed registration is February 23.

Details are in the flyer in our church, or on ascensionsaratoga.org (QR code).

Men’s Club

Meeting in-person in Worner Hall/Lounge Room Friday, February 21 at 6:00pm.

