



December 1, 2024

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

First Sunday of Advent

Jer 33:14-16 | 1 Thes 3:12-4:2 | Lk 21:25-28, 34-36

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

Are you one of those people who flips to the end of the book to find out what happens or maybe you roam the internet for spoilers of your favorite show? We have all been tempted to know what is going to happen before whatever it is unfolds, especially in tension-filled situations. Knowing the ending changes the way we experience the angst of the present moment, especially if it's a great ending! Like today: even as we anticipate and know the comfort and joy of the Advent season, we certainly do not begin there with our Gospel reading from Luke. In it, Jesus describes the coming of the Son of Man: this time will include moments of dismay, tribulation, assault, fright, and death. Contemplating this time of justice can be fearsome, but it is also a source of joy, because Christ is coming! We know that through Christ we have been redeemed - and that, if we remain faithful to him, we have the hope of eternal life. As Luke tells us, we can stand with our heads held high because redemption is at hand. Our Advent does not start with comfort and joy, but it sure ends there. Knowing this ending helps us have confidence and hope in God.

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

We are encouraged and challenged by the Word and our Advent traditions this first week to *remember how it ends!* In our first reading, the prophet Jeremiah relays consolation to the nation in crisis when God tells them the days are coming when the Lord will "fulfill the promise." This will bring them much-hoped-for safety and security. In Luke's Gospel, Christ's coming will be with "power and great glory" and although it sounds somewhat frightening, it will usher in redemption. Those are some spoilers providing great confidence and hope. In addition to our readings, the lighting of our first candle this Advent season is a visual reminder of the culmination of our salvation story! The Light who has come into the world has and will dispel the darkness. We can stand erect and raise our heads together to glimpse this light of Advent and fill our hearts again with hope that God surely is the one who keeps his promises. That is the best spoiler of all.

SING

*O come, divine Messiah!
The world in silence waits the day
When hope shall sing its triumph
And sadness flee away*

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

A Sober Reckoning

Happy Advent! Although this season shares Lent's purple color, it's not meant to evoke the penitential atmosphere of that other preparatory season. Yet Advent does invite us to a more contemplative mood. Apart from the dizzying holiday pace of December, we make room to ponder a mystery. God is with us: as a baby born to mortal limits, as the boundless Lord of the end-times, and as the Spirit that accompanies us right now, through all our days. Our times give us many reasons to be afraid. The perfect love of God-with-us casts out every fear. -*Preparetheword.com*

Damaged Outdoor Statue

The statue of the Ascending Christ near our church was damaged during a storm a few weeks ago. It's temporarily removed for repair and reconditioning. We will also add structural support at the base of the statue.

Another Photo Session for Jubilee Book

If you missed it in October, there is another chance to have your photo taken: **Sunday, Dec. 8 (12:30pm - 4pm) in the Classrooms. Walk-in welcome.**

Only \$15 per individual photo, \$25 per photo with 2 persons or more. You will receive 5"x7" prints on-site, and a Jubilee Book for \$10 (50% discount) when it's finished.

CHA Student Choir at Ascension Mass

We are delighted to welcome the Canyon Heights (Catholic) Academy Choir to our Ascension Church on **Sunday, Dec. 1 at the 9:00 am Mass.**

Nativity Play by Children

Open to all school-aged children

Bring costumes if you have them.

Dec. 14 & 21 (10am-11am): *Rehearsals*

Dec. 24 (5pm Family Mass): *Nativity Play*

To sign up: Scan QR code or visit ascensionsaratoga.org.



Special Collection for Retired Religious

Dec. 8

This annual collection benefits more than 20,000 retired religious across the U.S., providing crucial financial aid to qualified religious institutes, enabling them to address the growing needs of their retired members.

Thank you for your support.

WEEKLY OFFERING - NOVEMBER 24

-**\$6,034** (basket: \$4,733; online: \$1,301). Goal: \$6,500.

-YTD: \$123,856. Budget: \$136,500.

Thank you for your generosity.

"God loves a cheerful giver" (2 Corinthians 9:7)

MASS INTENTIONS

Nov 30	Sat	05 pm	Fr. Rey Sarmiento (L)
Dec 01	Sun	07 am	Gary S. H. Chang +
		09 am	Heather Opperman +
		11 am	Fr. Rey Sarmiento (L)
		05 pm	Mark Noel (L)
Dec 02	Mon	08 am	George Chrisman +
Dec 03	Tue	08 am	Y. K. Chang +
Dec 04	Wed	08 am	The Gerrard Family
Dec 05	Thu	08 am	Fred Tocchini +
Dec 06	Fri	08 am	Deane Sorola (L)
Dec 07	Sat	08 am	Barbara Rosier (L)

Advent Is Time to Take Off Our Masks

"Advent is a moment of grace to take off our masks -- every one of us has them -- and line up with those who are humble, to be liberated from the presumption of the belief of being self-sufficient, to go to confess our sins, the hidden ones, and to welcome God's pardon, to ask forgiveness from those whom we have offended" - *Pope Francis*

Advent Gathering with Mary

Gather - Listen - Reflect - Eat - Share as a Family

More than anyone else, our Blessed Mother can teach us how to prepare for Jesus' coming. Join our Advent Gathering to reflect and share thoughts on how to live this season of anticipation and preparation

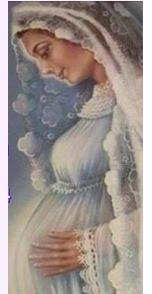
(starts with a simple meal).

Sunday, Dec. 8 (12:00pm - 1:30pm)

Worner Hall

Free admission

To help us prepare enough food, please sign up (in church) or **call the parish office 725-3939.**



Celebrate Immaculate Conception

The Mass celebrating the Immaculate Conception this year will be on **Monday, Dec. 9, at 8:00am**, as the feast falls on Sunday. While Bishop Cantú has granted a dispensation from the obligation to attend Mass this year, you are encouraged to come and celebrate Mass

Advent Reconciliation Service

Dec. 14, Saturday, from 9:45 am to 10:45 am

"When the door starts closing a bit because of our weakness and sins, confession reopens it." - *Pope Francis*

Ads/Messages in Parish Jubilee Book

Consider sponsor our Ascension Jubilee Book with:

- Ads for your *business* (or someone else's)
- Messages in *honor* of those who mark significant events (graduation, wedding, anniversary, etc.) or in *memory* of a loved one (death anniversary), etc.
- *Congratulations* to Ascension from your family or group.

Sponsorship levels:

Full Page \$250 | 1/2 Page \$150

1/4 Page \$100 | Business Card \$50

Our Contact Person:

Melissa at franmel1123@yahoo.com, or 408-823-9079.



Content for Parish 60th Jubilee Book

Our 60th Jubilee Book is in progress. We are collecting content - pictures, artifacts, and stories - for the book.

- Pictures and artifacts: If you have photos or materials related to Ascension (historic events, activities, buildings, etc.), please send them to the parish office or email to acsp95070@gmail.com (with a brief caption, your name, and your phone number).

- In your own words: Please write a few words to express what you like about our Ascension Parish, either (1) on the newsprint paper in church, or (2) on "Ascension Jubilee Book" on the website ascensionsaratoga.org. The comments that best define our community will be part of our 60th Jubilee Book. Thank you.