

IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY



→ Parish Mission + Mision Parroquial •

 $oldsymbol{W}$ ith Mary, we seek to know Christ better and to make him better known through our words and actions. **C**on María, deseamos conocer mejor a Cristo y darlo a conocer por medio de nuestras acciones y palabras.

FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT — MARCH 21, 2021



Bishop of the Diocese of Oakland

The Most Rev. Michael C. Barber, SJ

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The Pastor's Page/Página del Pastor

Dear families of the Immaculate Heart of Mary,

Today's readings present a contrast between "Jesus' way" and the "old way." An example of the old way is the law given to Moses and Aaron about leprosy: the leper was unclean and cast out of the community. Jesus' way is the opposite: the leper is reached out to, touched, and finally cured.

Nor ought we think of the "old way" as restricted to the days of Moses and Aaron, or even to the "old" testament. The difference between the old way and Jesus' way arises in own lives. We still choose, every day, to live in our old way or in Jesus' way. Jesus dared to touch a leper, disregarding the old way. The leper then was changed forever. He felt a calling. He couldn't keep himself from proclaiming that he had been touched by Jesus (even though Jesus told him not to!). Once Jesus touches us, we are called to proclaim his way.

This does not mean we should abandon the guidelines given to us by the county or state, however, we do not have to ignore what we can do for others less fortunate than ourselves. Saint Vincent de Paul week after week have continued to give to those less fortunate. May they be an example to all of us how we to can proclaim that we have been touched by Jesus and need to live Jesus's way.

Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for is.

Father Quang

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Queridas familias del Inmaculado Corazon de Maria,

Las lecturas de hoy presentan un contraste entre el "camino de Jesús" y el "camino viejo". Un ejemplo del camino viejo es la ley que recibieron Moisés y Aarón acerca de la lepra: el leproso era impuro y se echaba fuera de la comunidad. El camino de Jesús es lo contrario: el leproso se acerca, es tocado y finalmente curado.

Tampoco debemos pensar en el "camino viejo" como algo restringido a los días de Moisés y Aarón o incluso al "antiguo" testamento. La diferencia entre el camino antiguo y el camino de Jesús surge en nuestra propia vida. Todavía elegimos, todos los días, a vivir siguiendo el camino viejo o el camino de Jesús. Jesús se atrevió a tocar a un leproso, sin tener en cuenta el camino viejo. Así el leproso fue cambiado para siempre. Se sintió llamado. No podía dejar de proclamar que habia sido tocado por Jesús (a pesar de que Jesús le dijo que no lo hiciera!). Una vez que Jesds nos toca, estamos llamados a proclamar su "camino"

Esto no significa que debemos abandonar los mandatos que nos dan el condado o el estado; sin embargo, no tenemos que ignorar lo que podemos hacer por otros menos afortunados que nosotros. San Vicente de Paúl, semana tras semana, ha seguido dando a los menos afortunados. Que sean un ejemplo para todos nosotros sobre cómo podemos hacer para proclamar que hemos sido tocados por Jesús y necesitamos vivir a la manera de Jesús.

Inmaculado Corazon de Maria, ruega por nosotros. Padre Quanq

Weekday Masses/Misas Diarias

Monday, Wednesday, Friday: 8:0AM (English) - Tuesday, Thursday, Saturday: 8:00AM (Bilingual)

Saturday Vigil Mass 5:00PM (English)

9:00AM (English) - 10:45AM (Español) - 12:30PM (English) -2:00PM (Spanish) 5:00PM -Traditional Roman Rite (Latin)

Confessions

Tuesdays 6:00PM - 7:00PM — Saturdays 3:30PM - 4:30PM

Prayers & Weekly Scriptures/Oraciones y Lecturas de la Semana

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK **INTENCIONES PARA MISAS DE LA SEMANA**

Saturday March 20th

8:00 am ^{* †} Maria y Jose Oseguera Sanchez

5:00pm † Joseph Tan V. Dong

Sunday March 21st

9:00 am Gabrielle Ochoa-Aragon - Birthday

IHM Parishioners 10:45 am

12:30 pm Martha y Guillermo Del Cueto - Anniversary

† Beto Sotlo and Gustavo Soria 2:00pm

5:00 pm † Katherine Cruz

Monday March 22nd

8:00 am † Paul Hensler

Tuesday March 23rd

8:00 am † Dr. Miguel Ochoa

Wednesday March 24th

Keir Timmons - Birthday 8:00 am

Thursday March 25th

8:00 am ^{* †} Demesia Rodríguez

Friday March 26th

8:00am + Federico Taffuri Calderon

Please Help!!

We are in need of 6 volunteers per mass to help.

Help with seeing all persons wear face masks properly during Mass

After mass

- Wipe down pews
- Sanitize restrooms
- Wipe baskets
- Wipe door knobs
- Secure blue tape

Please contact George Verrett at:

verretg@gmail.com

Sick Relatives & Friends Parientes y Amigos Enfermos

Ryan McCloud, Ramon Antonio Toledo, Lyndsey Burrow, Kay Aviani, Chris Heuer, Meghan Heuer, Jan Coopoer,, Louise Delia, Anita Camera, Richard Grimes, Art Silvergleid, Dcn. Ron Horan, Connie Healey, Gina Lilly, Giselle Honore. *****

Roselia Santillon, Mary Lou Rodriguez, Chita Moore, Frances Ramos, Teresa Burke, Mary Franchetto, Rita and Richard Nahm, F. Albert Grosskopf SJ., Shane Pearce, Dan Holmes, Eleanor Janson, Patrick Bowen, Phillip Aiello, John Hesse, Janet Gonzalez, Ryan Enos, Jose Santos-Silva, Ross Stevie, Greg Fasula, William Smith., Romano Marchetti, Marge and Larry Cragle, Janet and Ehrich Heitzmane, Frank Vargas, Aurora Tiangco, Michalina Siedliski, Rick Souza, Gail Della Nina, Oscar Alvarez, Dan Holmes, Shane Pearce, Solangue and Nicole Patino-Patroni, Gloria Almeida, Priseiliano Cuevas, Bernadette Gluck, Jesus Garatachea, Maria de Jesus Jaimes, Ramiro Cortez, Darlene Riva, Baby Adrian Rodriguez, Enid Ortiz, Bob and Lelani Gray, Rodney Gallegos, Scott Bolen, Jen H., Daniel Figueroa, Frank Vargas, Ted Tinges, Laura Vecchio, Domingo Celis, Jr.

If You would like a name added to the prayer list, please call the parish office at (925) 634-4154 or e-mail:

bulletin@ihmbrentwood.com. At the end of each month you must

call to place the name again on the list.

Ud. quiere añadir un nombre en esta lista, por favor llame a la oficina de la parroquia al (925) 634-4154 o mande un correo electrónico al: bulletin@ihmbrentwood.com. Al final del mes, usted debe llamar a la oficina si desea que el nombre aparezca de núevo.

READINGS FOR THE WEEK LECTURAS DE LA SEMANA

Monday: 251: Dn 13:1-9, 15-17, 19-30, 33-62

Ps 23:1-6 Jn 8:1-11

Tuesday: 252: Nm 21:4-9 Ps 102:2-3, 16-21

Jn 8:21-20

Wednesday: 253: Dn 3:14-20, 91-92, 95

(Ps) Dn 3:52-56 Jn 8:31-42

Thursday: 545: Is 7:10-14; 8:10 Ps 40:7-11

Heb 10:4-10 Lk 1:26-38

Friday: 255: Jer 20:10-13 Ps 18:2-7

Jn 10:31-42

Saturday: 256: Ez 37:21-28 (Ps) Jer 31:10-13

Jn 11:45-56

Is 50:4-7 Ps 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24 Phil 2:6-11 Mk 14:1—15:47 Sunday: 37:

Lectura

Primera lectura

Jer 31, 31-34

"Se acerca el tiempo, dice el Señor, en que haré con la casa de Israel y la casa de Judá una alianza nueva.

No será como la alianza que hice con los padres de ustedes, cuando los tomé de la mano para sacarlos de Egipto.

Ellos rompieron mi alianza y yo tuve que hacer un escarmiento con ellos.

Ésta será la alianza nueva que voy a hacer con la casa de Israel:

Voy a poner mi ley en lo más profundo de su mente y voy a grabarla en sus corazones.

Yo seré su Dios y ellos serán mi pueblo. Ya nadie tendrá que instruir a su prójimo ni a su

hermano, diciéndole: 'Conoce al Señor', porque todos me van a conocer.

desde el más pequeño hasta el mayor de todos, cuando yo les perdone sus culpas y olvide para siempre sus pecados".

Salmo Responsorial

Ps 51:3-4, 12-13, 14-15

Oh Dios, crea en mí un corazón puro.

Segunda Lectura

Heb 5, 7-9

Hermanos: Durante su vida mortal, Cristo ofreció oraciones y súplicas, con fuertes voces y lágrimas, a aquel que podía librarlo de la muerte, y fue escuchado por su piedad. A pesar de que era el Hijo, aprendió a obedecer padeciendo, y llegado a su perfección, se convirtió en la causa de la salvación eterna para todos los que lo obedecen.

Evangelio

Jn 12, 20-33

Entre los que habían llegado a Jerusalén para adorar a Dios en la fiesta de Pascua, había algunos griegos, los cuales se acercaron a Felipe, el de Betsaida de Galilea, y le pidieron: "Señor, quisiéramos ver a Jesús". Felipe fue a decírselo a Andrés; Andrés y Felipe se lo dijeron a Jesús y él les respondió: "Ha llegado la hora de que el Hijo del hombre sea glorificado. Yo les aseguro que si el grano de trigo, sembrado en la tierra, no muere, queda infecundo; pero si muere, producirá mucho fruto. El que se ama a sí mismo, se pierde; el que se aborrece a sí mismo en este mundo, se asegura para la vida eterna.

El que quiera servirme, que me siga, para que donde yo esté, también esté mi servidor. El que me sirve será honrado por mi Padre.

Ahora que tengo miedo, ¿le voy a decir a mi Padre: 'Padre, líbrame de esta hora'? No, pues precisamente para esta hora he venido. Padre, dale gloria a tu nombre". Se oyó entonces una voz que decía: "Lo he glorificado y volveré a glorificarlo".

De entre los que estaban ahí presentes y oyeron aquella voz, unos decían que había sido un trueno; otros, que le había hablado un ángel. Pero Jesús les dijo: "Esa voz no ha venido por mí, sino por ustedes. Está llegando el juicio de este mundo; ya va a ser arrojado el príncipe de este mundo. Cuando yo sea

levantado de la tierra, atraeré a todos hacia mí". Dijo esto, indicando de qué manera habría de morir.

Credo de Nicea

Creo en un solo Dios, Padre todopoderoso, Creador del cielo y de la tierra, de todo lo visible y lo invisible.

Creo en un solo Señor, Jesucristo, Hijo único de Dios, nacido del Padre antes de todos los siglos: Dios de Dios, Luz de Luz, Dios verdadero de Dios verdadero, engendrado, no credo, de la misma naturaleza del Padre, por quien todo fue hecho; que por nosotros, los hombres, y para nuestra salvación bajó del cielo, *y por obra del Espíritu Santo se encarnó de María, la Virgen, y se hizo hombre*; y por nuestra causa fue crucificado en tiempos de Poncio Pilato, padecío al tercer día, segun las Escrituras, y subió al cielo, y está sentado a la derecho del Padre; y de nuevo vendrá con gloria. Para juzgar a vivos y muertos, y su reino no tendrá fin. Creo en el Espíritu Santo, Señor dador de vida, que procede del Padre y del Hijo, que con el Padre y el Hijo recibe una misma adoración y Gloria, y que hablo por los profetas.

Creo en una iglesia, que es santa, católica y apóstolica. Confieso que hay un solo bautismo para el perdón de los pecados. Espero la resurrección de los muertos y la vida futura del mundo. Amen.



Readings

First Reading

Jer 31:31-34

The days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house

It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers the day I took them by the hand to lead them forth from the land of Egypt; for they broke my covenant, and I had to show myself their master, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the

I will place my law within them and write it upon their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer will they have need to teach their friends and relatives how to know the LORD.

All, from least to greatest, shall know me, says the LORD, for I will forgive their evildoing and remember their sin no more.

Responsorial Psalm

Ps 51:3-4, 12-13, 14-15

Let my tongue be silenced, if I ever forget you.

Second Reading

Heb 5:7-9

In the days when Christ Jesus was in the flesh, he offered prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered; and when he was made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

Gospel (Saturday)

Jesus answered,

Now a man was ill, Lazarus from Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who had anointed the Lord with perfumed oil and dried his feet with her hair: it was her brother Lazarus who was ill. So the sisters sent word to him saying, "Master, the one you love is ill." hen Jesus heard this he said, "This illness is not to end in death, but is for the glory of God, that the Son of God may be glorified through it." Now Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus. So when he heard that he was ill, he remained for two days in the place where he was. Then after this he said to his disciples, "Let us go back to Judea." The disciples said to him, "Rabbi, the Jews were just trying to stone you, and you want to go back there?"

Martha said to him, "I know he will rise, in the resurrection on the last day." die. Do you believe this?" She said to him, "Yes, Lord. sister Mary secretly, saying, Jn 11:1-45 but was still where Martha had met him. the tomb to weep there. she fell at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died." deeply troubled, and said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Sir, come and see." And Jesus wept. So the Jews said, "See how he loved him." But some of them said, "Are there not twelve hours in a day? If one walks during the day, he does not stumble, have died?" because he sees the light of this world. So Jesus, perturbed again, came to the tomb. But if one walks at night, he stumbles, It was a cave, and a stone lay across it. because the light is not in him." Jesus said, "Take away the stone." He said this, and then told them,

"Our friend Lazarus is asleep, but I am going to awaken him." So the disciples said to him, "Master, if he is asleep, he will be saved." But Jesus was talking about his death, while they thought that he meant ordinary sleep. So then Jesus said to them clearly, "Lazarus has died. And I am glad for you that I was not there, that you may believe. Let us go to him." So Thomas, called Didymus, said to his fellow disciples, "Let us also go to die with him." When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, only about two miles away.

And many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to comfort them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went to meet him; but Mary sat at home. Martha said to Jesus, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that whatever you ask of God,

God will give you." Jesus said to her, "Your brother will rise." Jesus told her, "I am the resurrection and the life;

whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never

I have come to believe that you are the Christ, the Son of God, the one who is coming into the world." When she had said this, she went and called her

"The teacher is here and is asking for you." As soon as she heard this, she rose quickly and went

For Jesus had not yet come into the village, So when the Jews who were with her in the house comforting her saw Mary get up quickly and go out, they followed her, presuming that she was going to

When Mary came to where Jesus was and saw him,

When Jesus saw her weeping and the Jews who had come with her weeping, he became perturbed and

"Could not the one who opened the eyes of the blind man have done something so that this man would not

Martha, the dead man's sister, said to him,

"Lord, by now there will be a stench; he has been dead for four days." Jesus said to her. "Did I not tell you that if you believe you will see the glory of God?" So they took away the stone. And Jesus raised his eyes and said, "Father, I thank you for hearing me. I know that you always hear me: but because of the crowd here I have said this. that they may believe that you sent me." And when he had said this. He cried out in a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!" The dead man came out. tied hand and foot with burial bands, and his face was wrapped in a cloth. So Jesus said to them, "Untie him and let him go." Now many of the Jews who had come to Mary and seen what he had done began to believe in him.

Gospel (Sunday)

Jn 12:20-33

Some Greeks who had come to worship at the Passover Feast came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, "Sir, we would like to see Jesus.' Philip went and told Andrew: then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them. "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be. The Father will honor whoever serves me. "I am troubled now. Yet what should I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But it was for this purpose that I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name."

Then a voice came from heaven,
"I have glorified it and will glorify it again."
The crowd there heard it and said it was thunder;
but others said, "An angel has spoken to him."
Jesus answered and said,
"This voice did not come for my sake but for yours.
Now is the time of judgment on this world;
now the ruler of this world will be driven out.
And when I am lifted up from the earth,
I will draw everyone to myself."
He said this indicating the kind of death he would die.

The Nicene Creed I believe in one God.

the Father almighty,

maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

I believe in one Lord Jesus Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God,

born of the Father before all ages.

God from God, Light from Light,

true God from true God, begotten, not made, consubstantial with the Father; through him all things were made. For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven, and by the Holy Spirit was incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and became man. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered death and was buried, and rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and his kingdom will have no end. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is adored and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church. I confess one Baptism for the forgiveness of sins

and I look forward to the resurrection of the dead

and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Oracion San Miguel

San Miguel Arcángel,
defiéndenos en la batalla.
Sé nuestro amparo contra la
perversidad y asechanzas del
demonio. Reprímale Dios,
pedimos suplicantes,
y tú Príncipe de la
Milicia Celestial,
con el divino poder de Dios,
arroja al infierno a Satanás
y a todos los espíritus malignos
que andan dispersos
por el mundo
para la perdición de las almas.
Amén.



Prayer to St. Michael

St. Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. 6 Amen

Written by THE FAITHFUL DISCIPLE



Fifth Sunday of Lent

Jer 31:31-34 | Heb 5:7-9 | Jn 12:20-33

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

Recent news warned of a shortage of seeds this spring, as home gardeners carry on a hobby borne of the coronavirus pandemic. Even those of us not exactly known for our green thumbs jumped in, seeing home gardens as a way not only to stock our pantries, but to sow hope during a time of isolation and, for too many, mourning. In today's readings, we are reminded of an even larger hope - one that transcends optimism and feeling, and is centered in the theological virtue of Hope. God holds us close even on the most challenging of days. We see this in Jeremiah's prophecy of a new covenant, where all shall know God and our sins will be washed away. And today's Gospel reminds us that Jesus, like the grain of wheat, dies so that we may have new life. As we plant our seeds this spring, we will undoubtedly remember the people and things we have lost. Yet, as shoots break through with the warmth of spring, we can be reminded of Jesus, the source of all hope, and his promise that "I will draw everyone to myself."

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

As we approach Holy Week, the Gospel prepares us by reminding us that Jesus, like a grain of wheat, must die so that we may have new life: "Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life." I don't think that John is telling us to wallow in sadness or live joyless lives. Instead, perhaps he is encouraging us to "lose" those things that are not life-giving and instead focus on what draws us closer to Jesus – such as prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Perhaps as we continue our Lenten journey, we can identify the obstacles that get between us and Jesus, or that divide our families and communities. By letting those go, we free ourselves to be more like Christ, and to share the Good News of God's great love for us with others.

ACTION Buy a packet of seeds (if you can find one). Plant seeds in memory of loved ones who may have died this past year, or in remembrance of any type of loss you or your loved ones may have suffered. Offer prayers of thanksgiving for Jesus, the source of our hope.



Information/Información

St. Vincent de Paul for Friday's Food Pantry For the weekend of March 28, 2021, 2021, please bring canned milk. THANK YOU!

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Para el fin de semana del 28 de marzo, 2021, por favor traigan leche enlatada. GRACIAS!!!

SCHEDULE OF SECOND COLLECTIONS

April 2, 2021 - Good Friday - Holy Land April 4, 2021 - Facility Improvement

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FECHAS DE SEGUNDAS COLECTAS

2 de abril, 2021 - Viernes Santo - Tierra Santa 4 de abril, 2021 - Fondo del Mejoramiento de las Instalaciones.

CONTRA COSTA FOOD BANK



The Contra Costa Food Bank Mobile Produce Distribution Program distributes FREE produce on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of each month in the IHM parking lot from 12:00 noon to 1:00pm to families in need. This program is only for low-income families.

For more information, please call Ralph at: 925-437-3509.



Palmas de venta en la plaza que han preparado nuestros jóvenes para la recaudación de fondos para la Jornada Mundial de la Juventud. Sábado 27 de Marzo de 3:00pm a 7:00pm y Domingo Marzo 28 de 8:00am a 3:00pm.

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Palms for sale in the plaza that our youth have made for their **Word Youth Day Fundraiser**, on Saturday March 27 from 3:00pm to 7:00pm and Sunday March 28 from

Are you New to Immaculate Heart of Mary??

We are a very vibrant and active parish in Brentwood whose mission is, "With Mary, we seek to know Christ better and to make him better known through our words and actions." We do this in a variety of ways through our several sacramental prep programs, social outreach, as well as our active ministries, Bible studies, and an energetic youth program. We also LOVE new parishioners. Even though we are unable at this time to gather for ministry meetings many of the ministries are finding ways to stay connected through Zoom.

If you are not yet registered, please call the parish office at 925-634-4154 and ask for Ana. She will be happy to mail you a registration form or you can go on line and register at: ihmchurch@ihmbrentwood.com.

2021 Scholarships

8:00am to 3:00pm.



Graduating High School Seniors and Continuing College Students are reminded that the 2021 High School and College scholarships are available on the IHM Brentwood Website or at the parish office. Scholarships are **due by April 10, 2021**. A minimum of six High School graduates and one continuing college scholarships are available.

FISH FRY IS HERE!



Any questions contact Grand Knight Chris Romero at 925-642-8782.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO PICK UP YOUR CANDY ORDER -

Your order will be available next weekend in front of the office area with drive through on Saturday, March 27th from 4:00pm-7:00pm and on Sunday, March 28th from 10:00am-3:00pm.

Ministry Meetings/Reuniones de Ministerios

Confessions / Confesiones

Tuesday/Martes: 6:00 - 7:00PM Saturday/Sabado: 3:30 - 4:30PM

Devotions/Devociones

Monday to Friday/Lunes a Viernes 7:30AM

Holy Rosary/Santo Rosario

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Wednesday/Miércoles 8:30AM

Mother of Perpetual Help Novena Novena Madre del Perpetuo Socorro

+

Friday/Viernes 8:30AM

Divine Mercy Chaplet Novena Coronilla a la Divina Misericordia

Anointing of the Sick Unción de los Enfermos

Home Communion
Comunión a los Enfermos

Contact a priest / llame a un sacerdote

+

Marriage/Matrimonios

Requires at least six month preparation Requiere por lo menos 6 meses de preparación

Baptism/Bautismos

634-4154

+

Funerals/Funerales

Holy Cross Catholic Funeral Services Servicios de Funerales Católicos 757-0658

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(14 days prior to requested placement date)

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To schedule use of facilities
Please submit request to:
ihmfacilityschedule@ihmbrentwood.com

The Story of the Annunciation of the Lord

The feast of the Annunciation, now recognized as a solemnity, was first celebrated in the fourth or fifth century. Its central focus is the Incarnation: God has become one of us. From all eternity God had decided that the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity should become human. Now, as Luke 1:26-38 tells us, the decision is being realized. The God-Man embraces all humanity, indeed all creation, to bring it to God in one great act of love. Because human beings have rejected God, Jesus will accept a life of suffering and an agonizing death: "No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13).

Mary has an important role to play in God's plan. From all eternity, God destined her to be the mother of Jesus and closely related to him in the creation and redemption of the world. We could say that God's decrees of creation and redemption are joined in the decree of Incarnation. Because Mary is God's instrument in the Incarnation, she has a role to play with Jesus in creation and redemption. It is a God-given role. It is God's grace from beginning to end. Mary becomes the eminent figure she is only by God's grace. She is the empty space where God could act. Everything she is she owes to the Trinity.

Mary is the virgin-mother who fulfills Isaiah 7:14 in a way that Isaiah could not have imagined. She is united with her son in carrying out the will of God (Psalm 40:8-9; Hebrews 10:7-9; Luke 1:38).

Together with Jesus, the privileged and graced Mary is the link between heaven and earth. She is the human being who best, after Jesus, exemplifies the possibilities of human existence. She received into her lowliness the infinite love of God. She shows how an ordinary human being can reflect God in the ordinary circumstances of life. She exemplifies what the Church and every member of the Church is meant to become. She is the ultimate product of the creative and redemptive power of God. She manifests what the Incarnation is meant to accomplish for all of us.

Reflection

Sometimes spiritual writers are accused of putting Mary on a pedestal and thereby, discouraging ordinary humans from imitating her. Perhaps such an observation is misguided. God did put Mary on a pedestal and has put all human beings on a pedestal. We have scarcely begun to realize the magnificence of divine grace, the wonder of God's freely given love. The marvel of Mary—even in the midst of her very ordinary life—is God's shout to us to wake up to the marvelous creatures that we all are by divine design.



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