ST. THOMAS AQUINAS CATHOLIC CHURCH

185 St. Thomas Drive, Ojai, California 93023 805-646-4338 FAX 805-646-5928
Office Hours Monday-Friday 8:00AM-5:00PM
WEBSITE STACOJAI.ORG FACEBOOK.COM/STACOJAI FACEBOOK.COM/STACKIDS

ADVENET & CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE, Page Six

Served by the Augustinian's ~Pastor Father Tom Verber O.S.A.
Associate Pastor Father Fernando Lopez O.S.A. and Deacon Phil Nelson
In Residence: Father Bill Ryan O.S.A., retired and Rev. Alvin Paligutan O.S.A.

LITURGIES

Saturday
8:00AM Daily Mass

Vigils
5:00PM English & 7:30PM Spanish

Sunday
7:30AM & 9:30AM English
11:30AM Spanish

Weekdays
M-F 9:00AM Parish
Villanova 7:00AM Mass

COMMUNION TO THE HOMEBOUND
stephenpbarrack@gmail.com

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION
Saturdays 3:30-4:30PM or
by appointment 646-4338 X105

ROSARIES
Wednesday 6:15PM ~ Spanish
Friday 9:30AM ~ Cenacles of Life
Sunday 7:00AM

ADORER CHAPEL HOURS
Thursday Morning through
Saturday Morning

PRAYER LINE
805-276-3799 or deaconphil@stacojai.org

WEDDINGS
Call for appointment with the Pastor

BAPTISMS
(Call for appointment)
Spanish-Father Fernando
English-Deacon Phil

FUNERALS
Please call 646-4338 X101

TODAY AFTER THE 9:30AM MASS

DEDICATION OF THE NEW STATUE OF MARY

HOY DESPUÉS DEL 9:30 A.M. MASA

DEDICACIÓN DE LA NUEVA ESTATUA DE MARÍA

SECOND SUNDAY OF Advent

A voice cries out:
In the desert prepare the way of the Lord!
Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God!
Every valley shall be filled in,
every mountain and hill shall be made low.
Isaiah 40:3-4

Una voz clama:
Preparen el camino del Señor en el desierto,
construyan en el páramo una calzada para nuestro Dios.
Que todo valle se eleve,
que todo monte y colina se rebajen.
Isaías 40:3-4

DECEMBER 10, 2017

The Year of Grace

Sunday: THE SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT
Is 40:1-5, 9-11; Ps 85:9-14; 2 Pt 3:8-14; Mk 1:1-8
As we await new heavens and a new earth, let us make clear the way of the Lord by being servants of justice, truth and peace.

Monday: Is 35:1-10; Ps 85:9ab, 10-14; Lk 5:17-26
God has come to save us in Christ Jesus. He offers us peace, forgiveness and healing.

Tuesday: OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE
Zec 2:14-17 or Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab;
A woman, clothed with the sun, daughter of the Most High God, proclaims the greatness of the Lord, the One who comes to dwell with us. She is the servant of the Lord.

Wednesday: Is 40:25-31; Ps 103:1-4, 8, 10; Mt 11:28-30
Merciful and kind, the Lord gives strength to the weary and to all who are overburdened.

Thursday: Is 41:13-20; Ps 145:1, 9-13ab; Mt 11:11-15
The Lord is compassionate, Israel's redeemer, whose coming John the Baptist heralded.

Friday: Is 48:17-19; Ps 1:1-4, 6; Mt 11:16-19
Issiah exhort his listeners to follow the Lord. Jesus exposes the lack of wisdom and obstinacy of his contemporaries.

Saturday: Sir 48:1-4, 9-11; Ps 80:2ac, 3b, 15-16, 18-19; Mt 17:9a, 10-13
Elijah a type of precursor of the Messiah, is identified with John whose death foretells that of Jesus, the Son of Man.

Sunday: 3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
Is 61:1-2a, 10-11; Lk 1:46-50, 53-54; 1 Thes 5:16-24; Jn 1:6-8, 19-28
John witnesses to one who is to come, one far mightier than he, one who will proclaim freedom and deliverance from sin and death. As we await his coming again in glory, let us join with Mary in singing the praises of God.

SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES

Sunday: Second Sunday of Advent; International Human Rights Day
Monday: St. Damasus I
Tuesday: Our Lady of Guadalupe; Hanukkah begins at sunset
Wednesday: St. Lucy
Thursday: St. John of the Cross
Saturday: Las Posadas begins

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

I am the Immaculate Conception.

Words of Our Lady to St. Bernadette Soubirous at Lourdes, 1858

El año de gracia

Domingo: EL SEGUNDO DOMINGO DE ADVIENTO
Is 40:1-5, 9-11; Sal 85 (84):9-14; 2 Pe 3:8-14; Mc 1:1-8
Mientras esperamos nuevos cielos y una nueva tierra, aclaremos el camino del Señor siendo Siervos de la justicia, la verdad y la paz.

Lunes: Is 35: 1-10; Sal 85: 9ab, 10-14; Lc 5: 17-26
Dios ha venido a salvarnos en Cristo Jesús. Él nos ofrece paz, perdón y sanación.

Martes: NUESTRA SEÑORA DE GUADALUPE
Zac 2: 14-17 o Rv 11: 19a; 12: 1-6a, 10ab;
Una mujer, vestida del sol, hija del Dios Altísimo, proclama la grandeza del Señor, el Único que viene a vivir con nosotros. Ella es la sierva del Señor.

Miércoles: es 40: 25-31; Ps 103: 1-4, 8, 10; Mt 11: 28-30
Misericordioso y amable, el Señor da fortaleza al cansado y a todos los que están sobrecargados.

Jueves: es 41: 13-20; Sal 145: 1, 9-13ab; Mt 11: 11-15
El Señor es compasivo, el redentor de Israel, cuyo anuncio de Juan el Bautista fue anunciado.

Viernes: es 48: 17-19; Ps 1: 1-4, 6; Mt 11: 16-19
Issiah exhorta a sus oyentes a seguir al Señor. Jesús expone la falta de sabiduría y obstinación de sus contemporáneos.

Sábado: Sir 48: 1-4, 9-11; Ps 80: 2ac, 3b, 15-16, 18-19; Mt 17: 9a, 10-13
Elijah, un tipo de precursor del Mesías, se identifica con Juan, cuya muerte anuncia la de Jesús, el Hijo del Hombre.

Domingo: 3º DOMINGO DE ADVIENTO
Is 61: 1-2a, 10-11; Lk 1: 46-50, 53-54; 1 Ts 5: 16-24; Jn 1: 6-8, 19-28
Juan es testigo de uno que ha de venir, uno mucho más poderoso que él, uno que proclamará libertad y liberación del pecado y la muerte. Mientras esperamos su regreso nuevamente en gloria, unámonos a María para cantar las alabanzas de Dios.

SANTOS Y OBSERVACIONES ESPECIALES

Domingo: segundo domingo de Adviento; Día Internacional de los Derechos Humanos
Lunes: San Dámaso I
Martes: Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe; Hanukkah comienza al atardecer
Miércoles: St. Lucy
Jueves: San Juan de la Cruz
Sábado: comienza Las Posadas

INMACULADA CONCEPCIÓN

Yo soy la Inmaculada Concepción

Palabras de Nuestra Señora a Santa Bernadette Soubirous en Lourdes, 1858

ANGEL TREE

Our annual Angel Tree is up with names. If you are able, please take an angel for Christmas. BE SURE AND SIGN OUT YOUR ANGEL WITH RENE RIVERA after Mass out front of the Church. It is very important that we know who has each angle. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

ÁNGEL ÁRBOL

Nuestro Angel Tree anual tiene nombres. Si puedes, toma un ángel para Navidad. ASEGÚRESE DE SALIR DE SU ÁNGEL CON RENE RIVERA después de la misa frente a la iglesia. Es muy importante que sepamos quién tiene cada ángulo. Gracias de antemano por su generosidad.

PRAYERS FOR CONFIRMATION RETREAT ALL DAY TODAY

Please keep our young people attending the Confirmation retreat today in your prayers. Thank you to Net Ministries for leading the retreat. Thank you to the families who have and are hosting the them.

ORACIONES PARA EL RETIRO DE CONFIRMACIÓN TODO EL DÍA HOY

Por favor, mantengan a sus jóvenes asistiendo al retiro de confraternidad hoy en sus oraciones. Gracias a Net Ministries por liderar el retiro. Gracias a las familias que los han hospedado.

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS CHOIR

Lisa Boyd is organizing the Children's Christmas Choir for Children and youth from third grade through high school. They will have practice in the church on:
WEDNESDAY 12/13 4:45-5:45PM
WEDNESDAY 12/20 4:45-5:45PM
FRIDAY 12/22 3-4:300PM
Lisa Boyd 766-0042

CORO DE NAVIDAD PARA NIÑOS

Lisa Boyd está organizando el Coro Infantil de Navidad para Los niños y usted desde el tercer grado hasta la secundaria. Tendrán práctica en la iglesia en:
MIÉRCOLES 12/13 4: 45-5: 45PM
MIÉRCOLES 12/20 4: 45-5: 45PM
VIERNES 12/22 3-4: 300PM
Lisa Boyd 766-0042

POINSETTIA DONATIONS & REMBRANCE AT MASS

There are envelopes in the pews from the Women's Guild for Poinsettia Donations. For a donation of $10.00 or more, you may have a loved one remembered during the Christmas Season at every Mass. Please write the name of your loved one on the envelope. You may return to the office or place in the offertory basket.

POINSETTIA DONACIONES Y REMBRANCE AT MASS

Hay sobres en las bancas del Women's Guild for Poinsettia Donations. Para una donación de $ 10.00 o más, puede recordar a un ser querido durante la temporada de Navidad en cada misa. Escriba el nombre de su ser querido en el sobre. Puede regresar a la oficina o colocar en el cesta del ofertorio.

OPEN PANTRY Saturday, December16 at 9:00AM

First thank you for your continued support and generous donations of foods and monies. Also a BIG thank you to all the dedicated volunteers who prepare and stock the shelves and purchase needed items and serve at the Pantry.

DRY GOODS

Pasta
Mac N Cheese
Instant Potatoes
Rice
Stuffing
Gravy Mix
Soup Mix

CANNED GOODS

Fruit
Vegetables
Soup
Tuna
Canned Meat

BREAKFAST IDEAS

Cold Cereal
Hot Cereal
Pop Tarts
Bread
English Muffins
Instant Breakfast
Breakfast/Protein Bars
Jam/Jelly
Bisquick
Pancake/Waffle Mix
Syrup

MONIES

Cash/Check
Grocery Store Gift Cards

PERSONAL ITEMS

Toilet Paper
Paper Towels
Kleenex
Soap
Deodorant
Shampoo
Conditioner
Laundry Detergent

BABY ITMES

Wipes
Lotion
Baby Food
Baby Cereal
Formula
Diapers

OTHER

Packaged Dinner
Peanut Butter
Ketchup
Relish
Pickles
Mustard
Mayonnaise
Spaghetti Sauce

BEVERAGES

Gatorade
Pedalyte
Coffee
Tea
Fruit Juice
Water
Vegetable Juice

Sun:	12-10	SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT	
		ALL DAY	CONFIRMATION RETREAT
		7:00AM	Rosary
		8:30AM	Religious Education
		10:30AM	DEDICATION OF STATUE OF MARY
		10:30AM	RCIA
		6:00PM	NOVENA w/Mass
Mon:	12-11	11:00AM	Bible Study
		3:00PM	Bible Study
		5:00PM	Procession
		6:00PM	NOVENA w/Mass-Bilingual (Vigil Mass for Our Lady of Guadalupe)
Tue:	12-12	FEAST OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE	
		5:00AM	Mananitas
		6:00AM	Mass-Sp
		9:00AM	Daily Mass
		6:30PM	Procession
		7:00PM	Mass-Bilingual
		7-8:30PM	English Class
		7:00PM	Choir
		7:00PM	RCIA
Wed:	12-13	3:30-4:45PM	Religious Education
		4:45-5:45PM	Children's Christmas Choir Practice
		6:00PM	Religious Education
		6-7:15PM	Youth Group (Grades 6-8)
		6:15PM	Rosary-Sp
		6:30PM	Guadalupano
		7:00PM	CAROLING IN THE CHURCH
		7:30PM	Choir-Sp
Thurs:	12-14		Adoration
		7:00PM	Choir
		7-8:30PM	English Class
Fri:	12-15		Adoration
		9:30AM	Rosary
Sat:	12-16		Adoration
		9:00AM	OPEN PANTRY
		3:30-4:30PM	Reconciliation
Sun:	12-17	THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT	
		7:00AM	Rosary
		10:30AM	RCIA

Dom:	12-10	2ND DOMINGO DE ADVIENTO	
		RETIRO DE CONFIRMACIÓN TODO EL DÍA	
		7:00AM	Rosario
		8:30AM	Educación Religiosa
		10:30AM	DEDICACIÓN DE LA ESTATUA DE MARÍA
		10:30AM	RCIA
		6:00PM	NOVENA con masa
Lun:	12-11	11:00AM	Estudio Bíblico
		3:00PM	Estudio Bíblico
		5:00PM	Procession
		6:00PM	NOVENA w/Mass-Bilingual (Vigil Mass for Our Lady of Guadalupe)
Mart:	12-12	FIESTA DE NUESTRA SEÑORA DE GUADALUPE	
		5:00 a.m. Mananitas	
		6:00 a.m., Mass-Sp	
		9:00 AM Misa diaria	
		6:30 p. M. Procesión	
		7:00 PM Misa-Bilingüe	
		7-8: 30PM Clase de inglés	
		7:00 PM Coro 7:00 PM RCIA	
Mié:	12-13	3:30-4:45PM	Educación religiosa
		4: 45-5: 45PM Coro infantil de Navidad Práctica	
		6:00 PM Educación Religiosa	
		6-7: 15PM Grupo de Jóvenes (Grados 6-8)	
		6:15 p.m. Rosary-Sp	
		6:30 p.m. Guadalupano	
		7:00 PM CAROLING EN LA IGLESIA	
		7:30 p.m. Choir-Sp	
Jue:	12-14	Adoración	
		7:00PM	Coro
		7-8: 30PM	Clase de inglés
Vie:	12-15		Adoración
		9:30AM	Rosario
Sáb:	12-16		Adoración
		3: 30-4:30PM	Reconciliación
Dom:	12-17	3rd DOMINGO DE ADVIENTO	
		7:00AM	Rosario
		10:30AM	RCIA

DID YOU KNOW?

Neglect is the most common form of child abuse. It is the failure to meet a child's basic needs, including housing, food, clothing, education, safety and access to health care. Neglect is most often characterized by acts of omission that aren't easy to see. The signs of neglect are wide and varied, and may include: failure to develop and grow appropriately, or malnourishment, among infants; wearing inadequate clothing for the weather; and children who seem to be wholly responsible for the welfare of their siblings. If you know that any type of abuse is occurring, or if a child discloses to you, it is important to communicate these concerns to the appropriate authorities. Call your local law enforcement or child protective services department to report suspected abuse of any kind. For a copy of the VIRTUS® article "The Oft-Forgotten Type of Abuse: Neglect," visit: http://www.la-archdiocese.org/org/protecting/Pages/VIRTUS-Current-Online-Articles.aspx or call (213) 637-7508

¿SABÍA USTED?

La negligencia es sinónimo de abuso La negligencia es la forma más común de abuso infantil. Es la incapacidad de satisfacer las necesidades básicas de un niño, incluyendo la vivienda, la alimentación, la vestimenta, la educación, la seguridad y el acceso al cuidado de salud. La negligencia se caracteriza más a menudo por actos de omisión que no son fáciles de "ver", no es como el abuso físico, donde normalmente hay evidencia de marcas físicas. Los signos de negligencia son amplios y variados, y pueden incluir: falta de desarrollo y crecimiento físico adecuado o malnutrición entre los lactantes; vestir a los niños con ropa inadecuada para el clima; y niños que parecen estar a cargo del cuidado de sus hermanos. Si usted sabe que está ocurriendo cualquier tipo de abuso, o si un niño se lo revela a usted, es importante comunicar sus preocupaciones a las autoridades correspondientes. Llame al departamento de policía o al departamento de protección de menores para reportar sospechas de abuso de cualquier tipo. Para obtener una copia del artículo de VIRTUS® "The Oft-Forgotten Type of Abuse: Neglect" (El tipo de abuso comúnmente olvidado: negligencia), visite http://www.la-archdiocese.org/org/protecting/Pages/VIRTUS-Current-Online-Articles.aspx o llame al (213) 637-7508.

JUST ASK

- **...there is caroling in our church this Wednesday evening at 7:00PM would you like to come?**
- **...our church as caroling on Christmas Eve before Mass at 7:00PM in Spanish and 9:30PM in English. Would you like go with us?**
- **...our "midnight" mass is now at 10:00PM, it is a beautiful mass, would you like to go?**

AN EVENING OF CHRISTMAS CAROLS

Wednesday, December 13, 7:00PM

PARISH HISTORY

...Undated from the Ojai Valley News
Best Guesstimate is early '70's
Father Brown O.S.A. was the headmaster at Villanova at the time.

¡SOLO PREGUNTA!

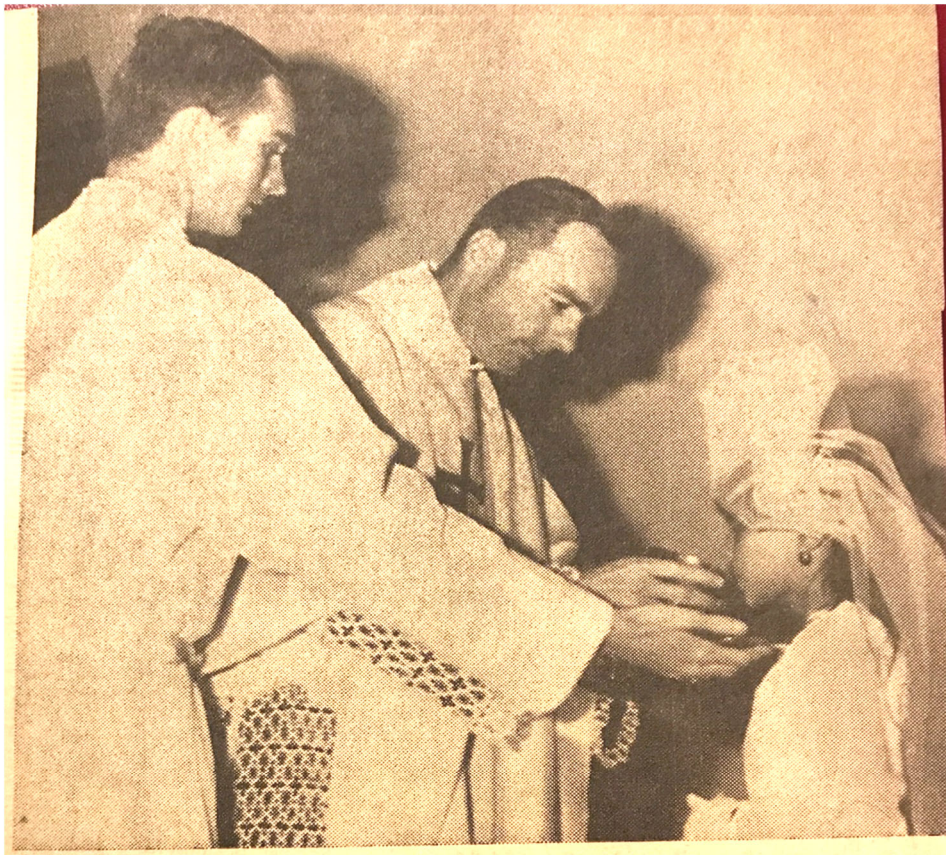
- **... hay villancicos en nuestra iglesia este miércoles a las 7:00 p.m. ¿te gustaría venir?**
- **... nuestra iglesia cantando villancicos la víspera de Navidad antes de la misa a las 7:00 p.m. en español y a las 9:30 p.m. en inglés. ¿Te gustaría ir con nosotros?**
- **... nuestra misa de "medianoche" es ahora a las 10:00 p.m., es una hermosa misa, ¿te gustaría ir?**

UNA NOCHE DE CAROLES DE NAVIDAD

Miércoles, 13 de diciembre, 7:00 p.m.

HISTORIA PARROQUIAL

... Sin fecha de las noticias de Ojai Valley
Best Guesstimate es finales de 1970's
Padre Brown O.S.A. era el director de Villanova en ese momento.



SPANISH MASS was celebrated at St. Thomas Aquinas Chapel December 12 for the first time here since the Augustinian Fathers were given charge of the parish almost 50 years ago. Fr. Jeremiah Brown, O.S.A., headmaster at Villanova Preparatory School, is shown as he administers first communion to Guadalupe Juarez with assistance from Gregory Van Buren, a student. The occasion was the Feast Day of Our Lady of Guadalupe who is Patron Saint of Mexico. It was even more meaningful since Guadalupe made her first communion under both forms, the bread and the wine, on her birthday. There will be another Mass in Spanish on Christmas Day at 9 a.m. in the chapel. Fr. John D. Keller, O.S.A., will be the celebrant. Future plans are to have a Spanish Mass every first Sunday of the month at 9 a.m.
(Photo by Geo. Cooper)

LA MISA ESPAÑOLA se celebró en la Capilla de Santo Tomás de Aquino el 12 de diciembre por primera vez desde que los Padres Agustinos recibieron el cargo de la parroquia hace casi 50 años. El padre Jeremiah Brown, O.S.A., director de la Escuela Preparatoria Villanova, se muestra mientras administra la primera comunión a Guadalupe Juárez con la asistencia de Gregory Van Buren, un estudiante. La ocasión fue la fiesta de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe que es Patrona de México. Era aún más significativo desde que Guadalupe hizo su primera comunión bajo las dos formas, el pan y el vino, en su cumpleaños. Habrá otra misa en español el día de Navidad a las 9:00 a.m., en la capilla. P. John D. Keller, O.S.A., será el celebrante. Los planes futuros son tener una misa en español cada primer domingo del mes a las 9:00 a.m.

Last Look

Último Mira

Dec. 10	10:30AM	Dedication of the Statue of Mary
	All Day	Confirmation Retreat
	6:00PM	Novena w/Mass
Dec. 11	5:00PM	Procession
	6:00PM	Novena w/Mass-Bilingual (Vigil Mass for Our Lady of Guadalupe)
Dec. 12	6:00PM	(Shelter moved to Presbyterian Church) Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe
	5:00AM	Mananitas
	6:00AM	Mass – Sp
	9:00AM	Daily Mass
	6:30PM	Procession
	7:00PM	Mass-Bilingual
Dec. 13	4:45-5:45PM	Children's Christmas Practice
	7:00PM	Caroling in the Church
Dec. 16	9:00AM	Open Pantry
Dec. 24		CHRISTMAS EVE
	5:00PM	Family Mass Children's Choir Performs
	7:00PM	Spanish Carols
	7:30PM	Mass-Sp
	9:30PM	English Carols
	10:00PM	Mass at Night
Dec. 25		NATIVITY OF THE LORD
	9:30AM	Mass-English
	11:00AM	Mass-SP
Dec. 31		VIGIL OF SOLEMNITY OF MARY
	7:30PM	Vigil Mass-Bilingual
Jan. 1		SOLEMNITY OF MARY THE MOTHER OF GOD (Not HDOO)
	9:00AM	Mass-English
	11:30AM	Mass-Sp

Dec. 10	10:30AM	Dedicación de la Estatua de María
		Retiro de confirmación todo el día
	6:00PM	Novena con misa
Dec. 11	5:00PM	Procesión
	6:00PM	Novena con Mass-Bilingüe (Misa de Vigilia por Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe)
Dec. 12	6:00PM	(Shelter se mudó a Iglesia Presbiteriana) Fiesta de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe
	5:00AM	Mananitas
	6:00AM	Mass-Sp
	9:00AM	Misa Ingl
	6:30PM	Procesión
	7:00 PM	Misa-Bilingüe
Dec. 13	4: 45-5: 45PM	Práctica de Navidad para niños
	7:00PM	Villancicos en la iglesia
Dec. 16	9:00AM	Despensa abierta
Dec. 24		VÍSPERA DE NAVIDAD
	5:00PM	Misa familiar Coro de niños realiza
	7:00PM	Español villancicos
	7:30PM	Mass-Sp
	9:30PM	villancicos ingleses
	10:00PM	Misa en la noche
Dec. 25		NATIVIDAD DEL SEÑOR
	9:30AM	Mass-English
	11:00AM	Mass-SP
Dec. 31		VIGILIA DE LA SOLEMNIDAD DE MARÍA
	7:30PM	Misa de Vigilia-Bilingüe
Ene. 1		SOLEMNITY OF OF MARY LA MADRE DE DIOS (no HDOO)
	9:00AM	Mass-English
	11:30AM	Mass-Sp

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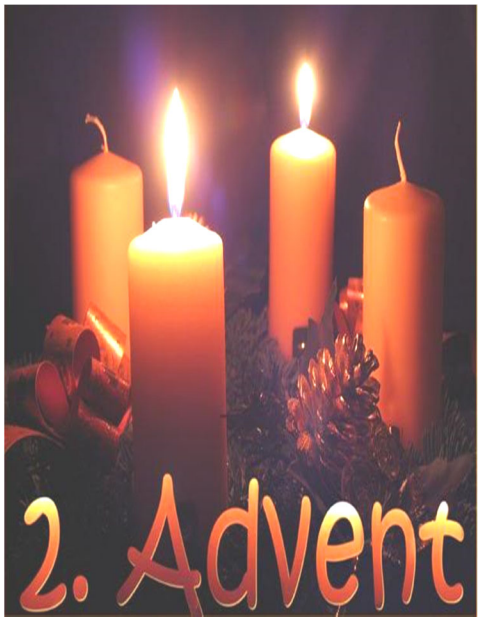
John said, "One mightier than I is coming after me. I am not worthy to stoop and loosen the thongs of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Directions: Complete the dot-to-dot to finish the picture.



PARISH DIRECTORY

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Associate Pastor, Fernando Lopez, O.S.A.	646-4338 X103	bflcosa@yahoo.com
Deacon Phil Nelson	276-3799	deaconphil@stacojai.org
Administrative Secretary, Kathleen Lansing	646-4338 X101	office@stacojai.org
Finance Director, Oscar Melendez	646-4338 X104	oscarm@stacojai.org
Business Manager/Youth Minister, Brian Campos	646-4338 X102	brianc@stacojai.org
Religious Education Director, Aina Yates	646-4338 X111	aina@stacojai.org
Bulletin Editor, Debbie Young	(Deadline Friday 3:00PM)	bulletin@stacojai.org
Facilities & Grounds, Ernesto Pineda	646-4338	office@stacojai.org
Aquinas Center & Facility Rental, Brian Campos	646-4338 X102	brianc@stacojai.org
STA THRIFT STORE, Fitzgerald Plaza	646-9256	423E. Ojai Ave. #102
Communion to the Sick	Steve Barrack	stephenpbarrack@gmail.com

DAILY MASS INTENTIONS

Sunday	December 10	9:30AM	Todd Kosub †	By:	Bob & Debbie Young
Monday	December 11	9:00AM	Fr. Pat Keane, OSA †	By:	Chong Crisp
Tuesday	December 12	9:00AM	Frank Coscarelli †	By:	Chuck Coscarelli
Wednesday	December 13	9:00AM	Fr. Pascal Nocero †	By:	Chuck Coscarelli
Thursday	December 14	10:00AM	Lisa Patterson †	By:	Carl & Barbara Enson
Friday	December 15	9:00AM	The Patterson Family †	By:	Carl & Barbara Enson
Saturday	December 16	8:00AM	Joy Nebeker †	By:	Bereavement
		5:00PM	Ministers to the Sick		

TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION

Many people think that Saint Francis originated the Christmas crèche, but its origins go far back. The Basilica of St. Mary Major in Rome has housed what is said to be relics of the cradle of Jesus since the seventh century. In time, every year during the Christmas season the reliquary (container for relics) was surrounded by an increasingly grand three-dimensional scene of the place of Jesus' birth. Rocks and trees, houses, streams, figurines of villagers going about their daily tasks were all included. It was a very dramatic presentation. If you've ever seen an elaborate model train installation, you get the idea. The proper term for this depiction is presepio, from the Latin word for "surround" or "hedge."

Over the centuries, the custom spread first to churches, and then to aristocratic homes. In Italy, whole chapels are often set aside for the presepio, and it is not unusual to have hundreds of figures. It can sometimes be a challenge to locate the Holy Family amid the crowd, almost like a Where's Waldo? children's book. The oldest surviving presepio is in St. Mary Major and dates from the thirteenth century, although many pieces have been broken or lost. Saint Francis of Assisi took a decidedly creative step in 1233 in the village of Greccio, when he directed his followers to fill a manger with hay and tether an ox and ass nearby. He then invited the villagers to attend Mass outdoors near the crib, the worshipers themselves becoming a living presepio. By the seventeenth century, the tradition was well-established, particularly in Naples, and had a firm hold in Portugal, Spain, and in the Provence region of France. Today, it is not unusual to find presepios with five hundred figures, a vivid reminder of Emmanuel, God-with-us!

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TRADICIONES DE NUESTRA FE

El día 9 de diciembre conmemoramos a san Juan Diego de México. Hace un par de años este indígena mesoamericano fue canonizado por su misión en las apariciones Guadalupanas. Hubo controversia alrededor de su canonización porque había quienes insistían que Juan Diego nunca existió. Después de investigar, el Vaticano decidió que no sólo existió, sino que fue y es santo, digno de ser modelo e intercesor.

Las investigaciones encontraron que el nombre indígena de Juan Diego era Cuauhtlatoatzin, es decir "Águila que habla". Tal vez por este nombre tan significativo fue que los franciscanos lo bautizaron Juan Diego. El nombre Juan recuerda al apóstol, quien escribió el evangelio más místico y cuyo símbolo es el águila. Diego viene del apóstol Santiago o san Diego quien evangelizó a los españoles durante el siglo I. De cualquier manera, Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin se convirtió en el "Águila que habla" y anuncia el evangelio místico según Guadalupe, es "Águila que habla" de amor, paz, consuelo y desafío en una tierra conquistada, oprimida y llena de promesa.

—Fray Gilberto Cavazos-Glz, OFM, Copyright © J. S. Paluch Co., Inc.