

St. Cletus Faith Formation Newsletter

Friday, December 9, 2022



Dear Parents,

This Sunday we celebrate *Gaudete Sunday*, which is the *Third Sunday of Advent*. (*Gaudete* means "Rejoice!") On the third Sunday of Advent we light the PINK Candle. The PINK Candle reminds us of the joy that the world experienced at the birth of Jesus, as well as the joy that the faithful have reached the midpoint of Advent. The third Sunday in Advent shifts from a tone of expectation of Christ's coming to one of rejoicing at the arrival of God's kingdom with the coming of Jesus.

To view a reflection on the Third Sunday of Advent from the USCCB, click on the link below.

<https://bible.usccb.org/podcasts/video/2022-12-11-reflection-7>



PRAYER for the Third Sunday of Advent

Lord God, may we, your people, who rejoice and look forward to the birthday of Christ, experience the joy of salvation, and celebrate this feast with love and thanksgiving. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen.

Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe:

Monday is the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Today Our Lady remains a powerful symbol of faith; her image is associated with motherhood and social justice; and this day has been honored as a day of prayer since 2016. Our Lady of Guadalupe is the patroness of the Americas.

It is a religious tradition of greeting Our Lady of Guadalupe with *Mañanitas* Guadalupanas the morning of December 12. Our parish will host this celebration at 5:00 a.m. After the *Mañanitas* (songs and prayers), everyone is invited to the Parish Center to share hot chocolate and pan dulce (sweet bread).

The Traditional Mass of the Roses will be celebrated at 7:00 p.m. on December 12. Following the celebration, all are invited for traditional foods and fellowship in the Parish Center.

RE Class Schedule

This week we have our last classes before Christmas Break. Classes will meet December 11 & 12, with our Teen Seekers meeting on December 14.

Following our next classes, we will be on an extended break for the holidays. We will continue to send out our weekly newsletters throughout the break on Fridays.

Classes will resume with our Confirmation Retreat on Saturday, January 21, 2023.



Sacramental Schedule:

The months of January and February will be very busy with our Sacraments & Sacramental preparation. Following are some important dates, so mark your calendar!

Thursday, January 19 – First Communion meeting for all families of our parish whose children will be receiving the Holy Eucharist in May 2023. The meeting will be held at 7:00 p.m. in Morrissey Hall.

Saturday, January 21 – Our Confirmation Retreat will begin at 12:00 noon in the Parish Center. We will conclude our Retreat by attending the 5:00 p.m. Mass.

Saturday, February 4 – The Reconciliation class will be held for children in grades 3–8 who will be receiving this Sacrament for the first time (Special Sacraments Group). The class will be held in the school building from 9:30–11:15 a.m. in Room 201. Enter through Door # 3.

Saturday, February 11 – The SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION is at 1:00 p.m. in Church. Bishop Robert Casey will be the celebrant.

Saturday, February 18 – The Sacrament of First Reconciliation for grades 3–8 Reconciliation Class (Special Sacraments Group) at 10:00 a.m. in the Church.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Catechists Wanted – We are looking for a permanent Catechist to work with one of our third grade groups beginning in January. If you are interested in learning more about the position, please contact me at the Faith Formation Office.

We are looking for individuals to serve as substitute catechists. **If you are able to help us, please contact me at the Faith Formation Office.**

GIVING TREE VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteer slots are now available for our Giving Tree distribution weekend. View slots, availability, age requirements, FAQs, and more at: www.stcletusparish.com/givingtree.

For further details, you may also contact: Kendall Grant, (708)215-5418, kgrant@stcletusparish.com

For Our Kids!

Sunday Readings and Resources for our children and families.

Catholic Kid's Media – For the Third Sunday of Advent we meet John the Baptist. A fun Catholic Reflection for kids based on the Third Sunday of Advent, Cycle A. To view, click on the link below.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bzmJTDVJR5w>

Saint Spotlight – This week we celebrate the feast days of St. Lucy on Tuesday and St. John of the Cross on Wednesday. Let’s learn more about these two saints.

[St. Lucy the Martyr, December 13.](#) [St. John of the Cross, December 14.](#)

The Feast of the Immaculate Conception

Yesterday we celebrated the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. Some are confused on what we are celebrating, so what is the Immaculate Conception all about?

No Bible verse explicitly states that Mary was conceived without sin. Instead, as St. John Paul II pointed out in his work, “*Redemptoris Mater*,” the Immaculate Conception is prophesied throughout the Old Testament.

In his book “*behold Your Mother: A Biblical and Historical Defense of the Marian Doctrines*,” Tim Staples walks through five of the six revelations and fulfillments in the Gospel of Luke that are derived from the Old Testament and depict the sinless Mother of God.

Staples explains how Mary as the beginning of the new creation is a Scriptural sign that she was conceived without sin. Mary’s “yes” or *fiat* to God in Luke 1:28 made her the first Christian and the beginning of new creation. Tim Staples explains this concept further:

In the order of grace, Jesus is the inaugurator, the source—indeed, Jesus Christ is the New Covenant. But in the order of time, as the grace of Christ is actually communicated to the world—“the salvific economy of God’s revelation”—Mary was the first human person to experience the redemption of Christ in her person. This grace, the grace of the New Covenant, was incarnate in Mary before the Incarnation—from the moment of her conception—and it was perfected in her through her declaration of faith and obedience.

Before the Fall, Adam and Eve were the beginning of the old creation and were also born without original sin, but when they rejected God, they became enslaved to sin. Since Mary is the beginning of the new creation, it would follow that she was also born without sin and that her “yes” to God made her the Blessed Mother. (From “*Get Fed – Bite Sized Faith*”)

God Bless,

Lawrence Manetti
Director of Faith Formation

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