

# CHURCH OF THE PRESENTATION

Painting by Eve Pecchenino

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### *A Letter From Our Pastor*

## AUGUST The Gift of Time

Dear Parishioners,

As August dawns upon us, I’m shocked by the simple reality that summer is just about over! Yes, some of us are trying to squeeze in that one last vacation or sit outside for just a few more minutes. But for the most part, we’ve started to transition back into the swing of fall.

How has this happened? Wasn’t it just yesterday that the kids were being let out of school and the sunny days began to lengthen?

I once heard from a psychologist that time seems to pass more quickly as we get older, because we’re experiencing fewer “firsts.” When we’re continually experiencing new things, time tends to stand still while we’re living them. After we’ve repeated those events numerous times, they don’t faze us much any more – and before we know it, months have passed, seasons have changed, and it’s time to start the annual cycle again.



Yet, we should not allow our time to be something that simply evades our grasp, trickling through our fingers. After all, time itself – every moment on this earth – is a gift from God. We each have 24 hours today and seven days this week to use however we please. Not one of us gets more time than another.

At the end of this summer, there is cause to look back and see how we chose to use our time these last few months. Did we set aside time to pray? Have we allowed for time to serve others? Did we devote time each day to serve God?

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6715 Leesburg Place  
Stockton, CA 95207  
(209) 472-2150

[www.presentationchurch.net](http://www.presentationchurch.net)



## “Thank You for Such a Wonderful Gift” *Presentation Parish Preschool*



There is a certain mystery to giving – we rarely see how our generosity impacts others. Yet, beginning this spring, we have seen and heard the fruits of our giving as the youngest members of our community enjoy faith-filled learning together at Presentation Parish Preschool!

“Presentation Parish Preschool has been truly blessed by the generosity of Presentation parishioners,” says Marijayne Patterson, Director of Early Childhood Ministries. “Without their selfless giving, our preschool would not have become a reality.”

A long-term hope and project of our parish came to fruition when the doors to the new preschool opened on Jan. 20, 2015. Furthermore, this preschool, this gift to our young parishioners, is the direct result of the generosity of Presentation families.

“The remodeling and construction of Presentation Parish Preschool, along with all of the startup materials, were paid for with the very generous donations of Presentation parishioners,” Marijayne says. “The donors went above and beyond in providing a wonderful outdoor classroom for our preschoolers. They provided the safest, easiest-to-



maintain surface and a very exciting play structure.”

So many members of our faith community gave in whatever way they could to create this new space that is the preschool.

“We have many caring families who have shared their time with us to enrich the children’s experiences, and who have shared their talents with us to enhance our environment,” Marijayne says.

When the new school year begins on Aug. 17, 2015, we will once again see and hear how our gifts blessed the lives of others in our community

“Parishioners will be able to see the excitement and joy on the faces of the children who are in our preschool program,” Marijayne says. “As the children acquire new knowledge and skills, they are being stimulated by supportive interactions with loving, caring teachers, while developing a love of learning.”

There are still many ways through which parishioners can become actively involved in the preschool as we look to its future and consider the children blessed by its existence.

“We would like to be able to start a scholarship fund to help families in

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**“Parishioners will be able to see the excitement and joy on the faces of the children who are in our preschool program. As the children acquire new knowledge and skills, they are being stimulated by supportive interactions with loving, caring teachers, while developing a love of learning.” — Marijayne Patterson, Director of Early Childhood Ministries**

## “Thank You for Such a Wonderful Gift”

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need,” Marijayne says. “We always welcome and enjoy new learning materials and supplies and have several projects that we are working on completing.”

The faculty and staff of the preschool appreciate all the ways that members of the faith community have given and will continue to give to sustain this gift for these children and those yet to come in the future.

“Thank you for such a wonderful gift to all of our children and families!” Marijayne says.



Presentation Parish School has capacity for 20 young students and is currently accepting registrations for a few remaining openings. For more information about Presentation Parish Preschool, please contact Marijayne Patterson at [preschool@presentationchurch.net](mailto:preschool@presentationchurch.net), 209-320-5735 or 209-320-5718.

# Save the Date!

.....  
**2015**  
**PARISH**  
**RETREAT**  
.....

The retreat will be held **October 16-17, 2015**.  
There is no cost to attend.

Contact the Parish Office for details:  
209-472-2150

## AUGUST The Gift of Time *continued from front cover*

When we assess the use of our time, we must make a spiritual examination – “Have I been a good steward of the time given to me?” Maybe now is a good time to make some changes in our lives and get more involved. There is no better time than right now to seek out ways to serve God, our parish, and those around us. This is what it means to be a good steward!

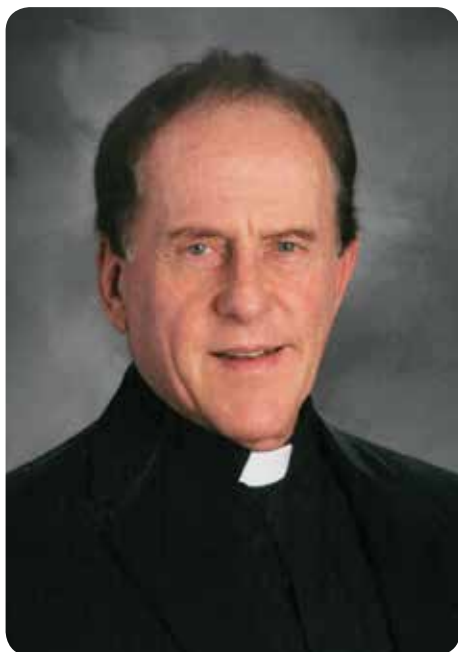
As the lazy days of summer give way to the busyness of fall, remember to keep God in your hearts, in your minds, and on your tongue as we continue our stewardship journey as a parish family. Please pray for me as I pray for you.

In Christ,  
Msgr. Lawrence J. McGovern, STL  
Pastor



## “I Decided to Give God First Choice”

### MSGR. LARRY MCGOVERN



*Msgr. Larry McGovern*

Our Msgr. Larry McGovern first felt the call to the priesthood while learning how to be an altar server for the Latin Mass.

“I remember that celebrating Mass was important in my family, and that I could do that – nothing particularly profound or deep for a fifth-grader,” Msgr. McGovern says. “It was the old style Mass with the priest’s back to the people, and the servers memorized all the Latin responses.”

As a young adult, Msgr. McGovern attended church regularly with his family and went to Catholic schools where the sisters talked about vocations and “sowed the seed.”

Yet, after an appendectomy during the summer between seventh and eighth grade, he thought that medicine would be a better option to pursue. Then, in high school, he attended a Jesuit prep school in Jersey City, N.J.

“I started to learn the finer aspects of Latin and Greek, along with German,” Msgr. McGovern says. “It was during Holy Week at a retreat that same year that the idea of the priesthood returned, starting a tug of war between becoming a medical doctor or a doctor of souls.”

When his family moved to California for his senior year at Junipero Serra High School in San Mateo, Msgr. McGovern met priests

“outside the classroom.” It was a completely different experience of the priesthood.

“In 1960, I went to St. Patrick’s Seminary for a deacon ordination along with now-Bishop Bill Justice, my classmate, and that sealed the deal – I decided to give God first choice,” Msgr. McGovern says.

After four years at seminaries in Northern California, Msgr. McGovern was sent to Rome in 1964 to study theology with the Jesuits at the Gregorian University. Prior to his last year of theology, he served as a deacon in the East End of London and had a great experience working with the youth and the intergenerational parish community.

On Dec. 21, 1967, he was ordained in St. Peter’s Basilica. His family joined him for the ordination Mass – the first Mass in English at the Vatican.

“Encourage your sons, grandsons or nephews to think seriously about hearing God’s call,” Msgr. McGovern says. “It would be nice if some young man or young men from our parish would give serious consideration to listening to God’s voice. He may be calling them to the priesthood like He called me.”

After his ordination, as a self-proclaimed “baby priest” Msgr. Larry served at the Cathedral in Stockton, where he was the only American priest among the others from Ireland.



*Msgr. Larry McGovern by the Tiber headed Home from the University, 1966*

## LARRY MCGOVERN

“I have fond memories from that assignment, from visiting the school and teaching the seventh and eighth-graders all about the Second Vatican Council,” says Msgr. McGovern, who was in Rome for two of the final sessions of the council. “Those kids, now adults, still tease me about those classes and my being so passionate about that great event!”

From 1971 until 1993, Msgr. McGovern also worked in the Bishop’s office in a variety of capacities, including Canon Law, Vocation Director, Missionary Offices, Chancellor, Chair of the Presbyterial Council, and Priests’ Personnel Board, just to name a few.

From 1978 till 1993, he was Pastor of the Cathedral, and then from 1993 until 2000, Msgr. McGovern was the Pastor of St. Anthony’s in Manteca.

In August of 2000, when Msgr. McGovern became Pastor of Presentation, the church building was yet to be constructed – his first big challenge.

“Our construction project worked out well with a very good steering committee chaired by Jim Falcone, who later became our Parish Administrator,” Msgr. McGovern says. “Since I had spent most of my priesthood in the city of Stockton, I knew that I would meet many families that I already knew.”

When reflecting on his years as a priest, Msgr. McGovern has most enjoyed preaching, teaching and “team ministry.” He describes delivering homilies with “a dimension of spontaneity” and with an “openness to the Holy Spirit’s inspiration.”

“I enjoy working with others as we share the responsibility for forming and nurturing the faith family entrusted to our care,” Msgr. McGovern says. “I affirm the commitment of so many at our parish who so generously give of their time, talent and treasure to make this a great place to grow in the faith.”

**“Encourage your sons, grandsons or nephews to think seriously about hearing God’s call. It would be nice if some young man or young men from our parish would give serious consideration to listening to God’s voice. He may be calling them to the priesthood like He called me.” — Msgr. Larry McGovern**



*Msgr. Larry McGovern at the Villa in Castelgondolfo with Pope Paul VI*



*Msgr. Larry McGovern with his family in Rome for his ordination*



*Msgr. Larry McGovern's ordination at St. Peter's Basilica*



## Making the Most of Every Sunday *Putting God First*

Many Americans set aside their Sundays to enjoy various leisure activities. Indeed, Sundays during the summer months may include cookouts, or perhaps afternoons spent at the swimming pool or baseball stadium. And when fall arrives, many fans will certainly be spending their Sundays in front of the television, as they become engrossed in the excitement of the National Football League's highly-anticipated Sunday games.

Sunday is also the day when more than 18,000 Catholic parishes in the United States will be celebrating Masses. But if recent statistics are any indication, the percentage of the U.S. Catholic population attending Mass that day will stand in stark contrast to the percentage of the U.S. television audience watching Sunday football games.

According to the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life's *U.S. Religious Landscape Survey* published in 2008, Catholics account for roughly 23.9 percent of the adult population in the United States. But of the 70 million-plus registered Catholics in the U.S., only 36 percent attend Mass once a week or more, according to Georgetown University's Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate. Only 12 percent of U.S. Catholics

participate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation at least once a year, and a mere 17 percent of Catholic men say they have ever even slightly considered becoming a priest or religious brother.

God gives us leisure time to clear our heads and recover from what can often be a hectic daily life. But it is important that we glorify God in all that we do, and time away from work or school provides a great opportunity to regularly celebrate the sacraments. As Catholics, we are obligated to attend Mass on a weekly basis, barring illness or extenuating circumstances. But this is just the first step. Spending time in prayer, Eucharistic Adoration and Reconciliation provides us with the grace, healing and the wisdom to live as disciples of Christ on a daily basis. And sharing our time, talent and treasure through ministry participation and charitable giving enables us to serve our brothers and sisters in Christ, thus ensuring that we are placing God at the top of our list of priorities.

Each Sunday presents an opportunity for us to foster our discipleship commitments to Christ. So make the time and discern ways that you can put God first, on every Sunday throughout the year.



## *Holy Grounds Cafe*

**St. Joseph Meeting room**

**Wednesdays from 7:30 to 10:30 a.m.**

**Sundays from 7:30 a.m. to noon.**

*Come visit with friends and make new ones!*

**If you would like to use Holy Grounds for your next parish group meeting, please contact**

**Ron Hoverstad at [rhoverstad@sbcglobal.net](mailto:rhoverstad@sbcglobal.net)**

## Living According to God's Will *Forming a Conscience and Moral Code*

As Christians, it is important that we recognize the difference between right and wrong – both morally and ethically. Sometimes, though, this line can become blurred.

Many situations we encounter in our lives include variables that can leave us internally conflicted and unsure of how to move forward, in accordance with God's will.

So, how do we work through these moral conundrums? One way is to develop a solid Christian conscience.

A moral conscience exists in the heart of every individual. As the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* states, "When he listens to his conscience, the prudent man can hear God speaking. Conscience is a judgment of reason whereby the human person recognizes the moral quality of a concrete act that he is going to perform, is in the process of performing, or has already completed" (1777, 1778).

Think of your conscience as the "angelic" version of yourself sitting on your shoulder, giving you sound advice.

While everyone is blessed with a conscience, each individual has a responsibility to develop this conscience from the time they are young. Parents obviously play an important role in developing their children's consciences. As the primary educators of their children on ethical issues and the Catholic faith, parents have a responsibility to teach virtue to their children and help them to avoid fear, selfishness and pride. As we grow older, we take on the lifelong challenge of continually forming our own consciences, and establishing a moral code that enables us to make the proper judgments.

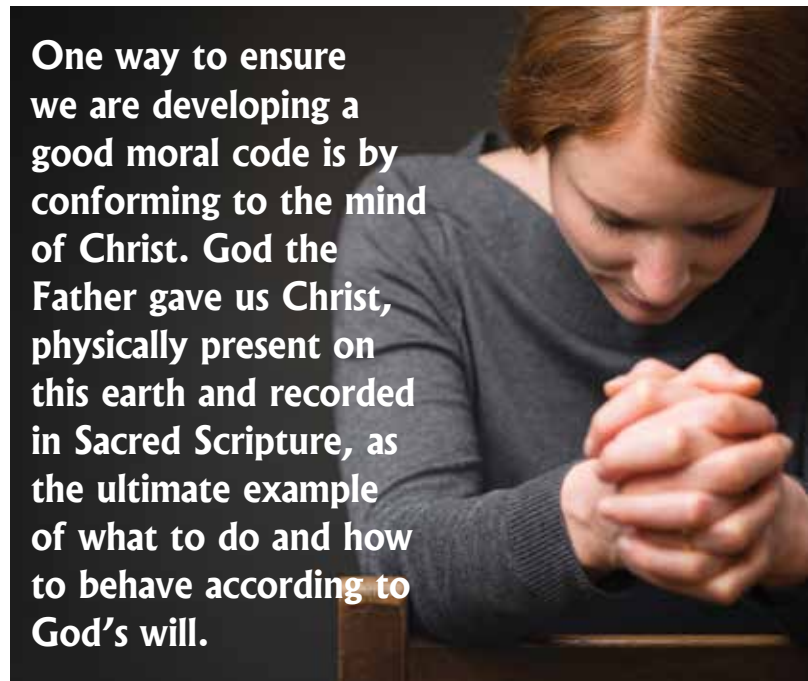
One valuable tool in forming a conscience is the practice of introspection. "It is important for every person to be sufficiently present to himself in order to hear and follow the voice of his conscience" (CCC 1779). In contemporary society, where there are so many distractions and routines, it is extremely

important that we take the time to look inward and truly listen to what our inner voice is telling us.

Another way to ensure we are developing a good moral code is by conforming to the mind of Christ. God the Father gave us Christ, physically present on this earth and recorded in Sacred Scripture, as the ultimate example of what to do and how to behave according to God's will. As Bishop Donald W. Wuerl aptly states in *The Teaching of Christ*, "To conform to the mind of Christ is to conform to the mind of the Father" (p. 244). In other words, when we act in loving imitation of Christ, we are certain to make practical judgments of conscience.

The next time you are faced with a moral dilemma, take some quiet time to look inward, weigh the positive and negative outcomes, and listen to the voice of your conscience. Read the Gospels for examples of Christ's teachings. By making this a regular practice, you will find that the voice of your conscience will come in louder and more clearly than you may have initially expected.

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6715 Leesburg Place · Stockton, CA 95207  
(209) 472-2150 · [www.presentationchurch.net](http://www.presentationchurch.net)

## Liturgy Schedule

**Weekdays (Mon-Fri):** 7:00 a.m.

**Saturday:** 5:00 p.m. (Vigil)

**Sunday:** 7:00 a.m., 8:45 a.m.\*\*, 10:30 a.m.\*\*,  
12:15 p.m., 2:15 p.m. (Spanish),  
5:00 p.m. (Life Teen)

*\*\*Toddler Time Parent Co-Op Child Care is available during the Sunday 8:45 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. Masses in the Preschool. Signing Ministry for the deaf is available at the Sunday 8:45 a.m. Mass.*

**Confessions:** Wednesday, 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. and Saturday, 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., or by appointment.

JULY/AUGUST 2015

## Looking Forward to Another Great School Year at Presentation School

Were you aware that Pope Francis began his career as a Jesuit priest as a high school teacher of literature? He has always had special regard for Catholic education. The Holy Father says, “How much good has been done by Catholic schools? They proclaim Christ, and that means showing that to believe in and follow Him is not only something right and true, but it is also something beautiful.” Maria Amen, the Principal at our Presentation School, reflects that same enthusiasm.

Mrs. Amen points out that there are some significant changes occurring next year – there are a number of new teachers, and the organization of the school is changing with the

addition of Mr. Fred Medina as President.

“The change in structure allows me to focus on curriculum, instruction, and the spiritual formation and development of our students,” Mrs. Amen says. “Mr. Medina will oversee the business side of the school.

“A Catholic School education is an excellent gift to a child,” she continues. “People need to be aware that we still have openings in grades two, three, five, six, and eight. I look forward to another great year next year. It is a special year as it is our 50th year as a school – our Golden Anniversary.”

