

CHURCH OF THE PRESENTATION

Painting by Eve Pecchenino

In this Issue

- 3 November: Time to Be Grateful
- 4 "It Is Vital for All Parents to Pass on Their Faith!"
Presentation's Laura and Brett Setness
- 6 Pope Francis' Visit to the United States: A Call to Live the Gospel
- 7 Advent/Christmas Schedule
- 8 Our Presentation School Update

Taking Care of Our Parish Home *The Altar Society*

For the ladies of the Altar Society here at Presentation, working to keep our looking beautiful is a labor of love – for the love of God and the love of our parish family.

"This is God's house – you should keep it clean and neat," says Altar Society Coordinator Jo Giometti. "When we leave each Saturday [after cleaning], we have the satisfaction of knowing we have done all we can to make God's dwelling a welcoming place for all our parishioners."

The Altar Society has served our parish for more than 40 years,

handling tasks that might seem mundane, but are vital for the maintenance of our beautiful worship space. From cleaning pews, to laundering the altar linens, to sweeping floors and filling holy water containers, the 30 members of the Altar Society take seriously their responsibility to care for the Lord's house.

Each Saturday morning, members gather to prepare the for the upcoming Masses, while a group of parishioners fondly known as

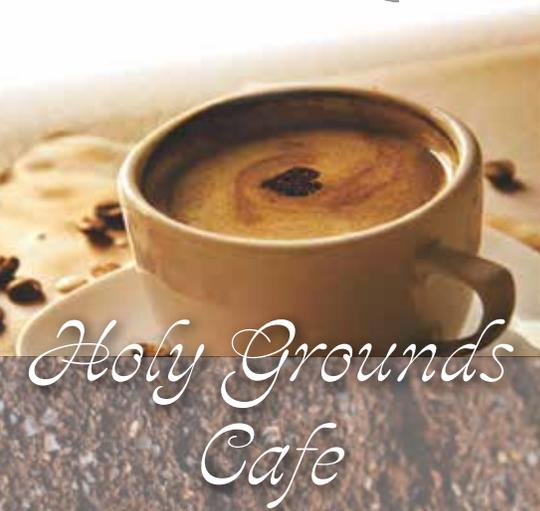
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Several of the women who served with the original Altar Society continue to serve with the Altar Society today – over 40 years later!

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The Altar Society *continued from front cover*

the “Pew Angels” come early Monday mornings to make sure everything is neat and ready for the upcoming week.

“I live across the street from the ,” says Jo, who has served with the Altar Society since the ministry was established in 1971. “We were here before the was here, in 1952. When it started out, there were no houses around. The was just sitting in the middle of an alfalfa field. You just got involved - whenever there was something to do, someone just ran over and did it. It was a neighborhood and a bunch of women who just got involved.”

Altar Society members will say that they truly find a sense of fulfillment in this ministry. “We’re just ladies who love to do what we do,” Jo says. “Serving in this way makes you feel good. It gives you a feeling of satisfaction.”

Recently, some of our parish youth who are preparing for Confirmation have started

helping members of the Altar Society with the upkeep of the .

“Having young people with so much energy is wonderful,” Jo says. “They have helped by repairing hymnals, doing minor repair work, and they willingly do anything that is asked of them. They’ve really been helpful.”

Just as we take the time to clean and tidy our homes when entertaining guests, the members of the Altar Society hope their efforts make other members of the parish family feel welcome and at home in our .

As someone who has been involved in serving the parish community for most of her life, Jo encourages others to get involved.

“You’re on this Earth to help people,” she says. “God has been good to me; it’s time for me to do good for others. Everybody has something they can give, if they’ll take the time to do it.”

Interested in sharing your time and talent by caring for God’s house? We welcome you to join the Presentation Altar Society. For more information, please contact Jo Giometti at 209-477-1398.

A Letter From Our Pastor

November: Time to Be Grateful

Dear Parishioners,

It has been said many times that people who are good stewards are grateful people and, as a result, are happy people. If we think about the good things in our lives – no matter how many challenges and sorrows there may be – and make them the center of our thoughts, it makes everything better.

As Catholics, we are thankful people because of our faith. As our second reading for All Souls Day reminded us: “It is precisely in this that God proves his love for us: that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Rom. 5:8) As we regularly share the Eucharist (from the Greek *eucharistia* which means quite simply “thanksgiving), we are grateful for this gift from God in the person of Jesus, our High Priest. “So let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and to find grace for timely help.” (Hebr. 4:16)

As a faith family, we share this meal of “thanksgiving” often, and certainly at every Mass.

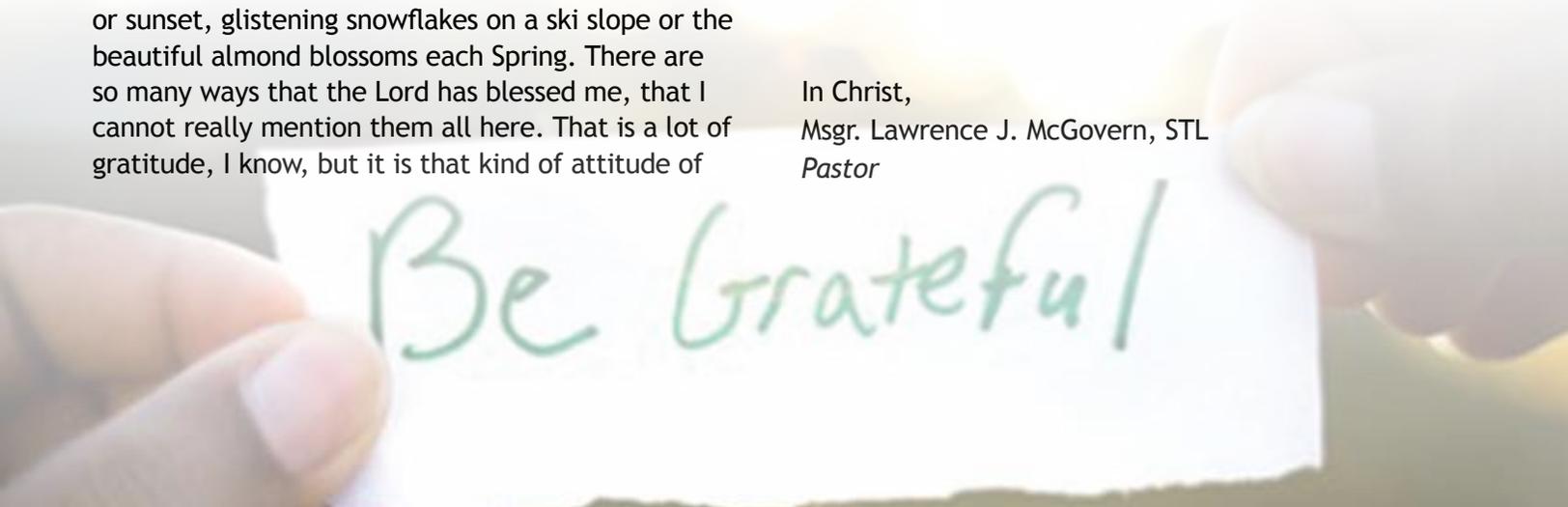
As your pastor, I thank God for my priesthood to be of service to each one of you. For me, the ideal time for thanksgiving is at every Mass that we celebrate together; I can also thank God for a beautiful sunrise or sunset, glistening snowflakes on a ski slope or the beautiful almond blossoms each Spring. There are so many ways that the Lord has blessed me, that I cannot really mention them all here. That is a lot of gratitude, I know, but it is that kind of attitude of

appreciation for God’s presence in our lives and His many gifts to us – upon which we need to concentrate – not just this month when Thanksgiving is so much on our minds, but throughout the year.

Thoughts of thanksgiving are not confined to one time of year, but every day of the year. That should be the goal for each of us. I heard someone say recently that our Thanksgiving holiday has Protestant roots, but there are Catholic roots to the tradition, as well. Were you aware that in 1565 – 56 years before the Pilgrims celebrated their first Thanksgiving – Spanish Catholic settlers and Native Americans celebrated a Thanksgiving at a Holy Mass in St. Augustine, Fla.?

Thanksgiving should be a way of life for us each and every time we gather to celebrate Mass, to pray or to just enjoy one another’s company – moments in time for eternal gratitude. Everything we have is a gift from God. It may be something basic like fresh air and clean water... and finally some rain. It may be a home cooked meal. It is certainly family, friends and our very parish. Let us express our thanks to almighty God as we share our time, talent and treasure, remembering that you and I are blessed.

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



Be Grateful



“It Is Vital for All Parents *Presentation’s Laura*

The lyrics from a contemporary song trouble Laura Setness: “I’ll follow my arrow wherever it goes.” With so much in society pointing our youth in different directions, how will they grow up knowing what is the correct path?

“It is vital for all parents to pass on their faith!” Laura says. “It’s a fine line that I try to walk to be an example for my children – encourage them, but allow them to choose the correct path of their own free will.”

Her parents moved to North Stockton shortly after she was born, so Laura has been a Presentation parishioner her whole life. Through attending Presentation School from third through eighth grades, Laura discerned an integral part of her identity – a deep love for the Mass.

“I developed a love for the Mass because of the banners our class would make and getting to do the readings,” Laura says. “I have fond memories of those Masses.”

After graduating from college, she fell more in love with the Mass while part of a vibrant faith community in Santa Monica. Then, Laura moved back to the area, met her husband, Brett, and started attending Presentation again. At the time, right after the fire had burned the old church, Masses were being held at the Lincoln High School gym.

“Fr. Michael Kelley was the pastor, and my parents kept telling me about his five-minute homily that was always very meaningful,” Laura says. “His homilies spoke to me and helped me connect again with my church. We have been active members ever since.”

The faith has always been a part of Laura’s life, and her parents and grandparents have been amazing role models. Though he wasn’t Catholic when they were married, Brett was supportive of Laura’s beliefs and, over the years, asked many questions.

“He eventually decided to become Catholic a few years ago, and I was ecstatic!” Laura says. “Brett was



Presentation’s Laura and Brett Setness

always attracted to my strength with my church, and he wanted that for himself.”

Within the Presentation community, Laura and Brett have raised their four children – Morgan, 18; Katelynn, 18; Jillian, 12; and Rhiann, 9. They are no strangers to having young children at Mass and encourage parents going through that time!

“Almost everyone at Mass has gone through the same thing,” Laura says. “With my kids, I have seen them be wonderful and then completely embarrassing! We try to redirect them, teach them, remind them, and encourage them to do what is right, as far as behavior goes.”

The older Setness children looked forward to becoming fifth-graders, because then they could begin serving Mass. The twins also looked forward to growing tall enough to see over the ambo – then, they could be lectors.

“I’ve always encouraged the kids to do what they can to help at Mass,” Laura says. “Getting involved in our parish should be very easy for anyone – so many opportunities!”

Laura has been involved in different ways over the years. She served as a CCD teacher at one point and as a greeter and a lector. Brett is still a “neophyte”

s to Pass on Their Faith!” ra and Brett Setness



The Setness girls (from left) Morgan, Jillian, Rhiann, and Katelynn

to the church and currently a member of the Knights of Columbus. In the future, Laura can see her family getting involved with Love Stockton.

“There really is something for everyone,” Laura says. “There are clubs and groups for literally every

type of service. You can’t be shy about asking. Reach out to the person in charge of the group.”

By their active participation in Mass, Laura has felt her family grow closer to their community and to each other.

“Through lectoring, my twins and I share our love of reading with the congregation,” Laura says. “Through altar serving, the girls become closer to the priests and each other. When the girls participate in Mass, it makes me very proud of them as they give their talent to the church!”

Within the Presentation community, the Setness family feels that they have been surrounded by others who encourage them to love and serve Christ, and to continue on the path that brings them closer to Him.

“We are by no means a perfect family, but I keep praying for help raising my children in our strong Catholic faith,” Laura says. “God-willing, my children will find their way on the right path and be good examples for others as each of us continues our life’s journey.”

Presentation parishioner Laura Setness, a mother of four, shares her thoughts and ideas on participating in Mass with a young family

- First of all, attend Mass regularly even when the kids are little. The kids will get used to it.
- On the days when the baby just won’t be quiet, go ahead and go home. You tried, and that’s okay if it didn’t work out, but try again next week.
- Make sure the kids are full when you go and that they have something to do when they are very young. We bought Christian coloring books and books about the saints, and those kept the kids busy during Mass. They only got to work on them during Mass, so it was a special activity.
- Teach the kids how to follow the Mass in the missalette.
- Teach the kids how to follow the music in the hymnal.
- Show them all the prayers.
- Hug them and hold them during Mass.
- Reward them for good behavior. I hate to say I brought food into church, but I would have a baggie of dry Cheerios and feed them to the kids one at a time if they were quiet for a minute or two.
- Make their favorite breakfast on the weekend as a reward.
- Make Mass part of your weekend just like soccer or baseball or date night. You might need to schedule Mass into the weekend. Mass should be the number one priority.



Pope Francis' Visit to the United



Julie and Stephen Lofy in front of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C.



Cathedral Basilica of Sts. Peter and Paul in Philadelphia



Becky Vergano at the Convention Center for the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia

St. Francis of Assisi is famous for instructing his followers: “Preach the Gospel at all times and when necessary use words.” This saying seems to have become the personal motto of our current pope who bears the great saint’s name. During his recent visit to the United States, Pope Francis demonstrated the healing power of our Lord’s mercy in countless ways. Rather than speaking words of correction, the Holy Father appears to have sought to share God’s redemptive love with each individual he encountered – whether he or she was a congressman, bishop, member of the faithful laity, or a homeless person at a shelter.

Parishioners Julie and Stephen Lofy were blessed by a last-minute trip to Washington, D.C. There, they were able to attend both St. Junipero’s Canonization Mass at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception and Pope Francis’ address to Congress.

“The excitement of being there was incredible,” Julie Lofy says. “We had just a little glimpse of him before Mass, because there were so many people in front of us; and, I don’t know, it just made it real at that moment – I guess he was relatable at that point.”

In reflecting on the Pope’s message, Julie appreciated its gentle simplicity.

“He wasn’t trying to criticize or anything like that,” she says. “He acknowledged the good, but also reinforced certain things that we should all take into consideration, such as the importance of doing unto others as we would have them do to us.”

Even though he is a great and important man, adds Julie, Pope Francis made himself seem like “one of us” through his smiling and welcoming attitude.

“He shows us what to do, and it is easy to relate to him in that way,” Julie says.

Rebecca (Becky) Vergano, parishioner, was also able to see and listen to the pope during the World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia.

States: A Call to Live the Gospel

“It was amazing to be able to be at the Mass with the pope,” Becky says. “It was an experience that I will never forget.”

Among the many things that the Holy Father said, Becky was most impacted by Pope Francis’ reminder that our households should be a small church, like that of the Holy Family. She also appreciated Pope Francis’ emphasis on the importance of family and the individual roles within it.

“He said we need to remember that grandparents are our memories, parents are the teachers, children are our future, and love is our mission,” Becky says.

Becky found it encouraging to know that we have a pope who is willing to travel the world in order to become a part of our lives, making “himself known to us and making us a part of Christ’s mission.”

Looking back on the entire experience of the World Meeting of Families, Becky feels that it has deepened her sense and appreciation of the Church’s universality.

“As we sat there waiting for Pope Francis, we were surrounded by people who were all there for the same reason,” she says. “It was nice to be able

to speak as if we knew one another, united by our common experiences.”

When Pope Francis concluded his visit to the United States, he ended with a call to activism: “As I leave, I ask all of you...do not let your enthusiasm for Jesus, His Church, our families, and the broader family of society run dry. May our days together bear fruit that will last, generosity and care for others that will endure! Just as we have received so much from God – gifts freely given to us, and not of our own making – let us freely give to others in return.”

Through these words, the Holy Father spoke not only to those present at the World Meeting of Families, but to all of us. He invites each one of us to examine our gifts and discover how God is asking us to share them – preaching the Gospel through our daily living.

“I think that it has reinforced the idea that we need to be more aware of others each day – in our jobs, in meeting strangers on the street, and even in our own family,” Julie says. “In our actions, we should try to really demonstrate love to others just as Christ does.”

Advent/Christmas Schedule

Immaculate Conception – Holy Day of Obligation

Dec. 7

5:30 p.m. Vigil (English)

Dec. 8

6 a.m.

8:30 a.m. – School

5:30 p.m. – Spanish

St. Mary’s High School Music Concert – Dec. 9

Our Lady of Guadalupe – Dec. 12

Advent Penance Service – Dec. 16

7 p.m.

Christmas Eve – Wednesday, Dec. 24

3 p.m. – Church

3:15 p.m. – Community Center

5:30 p.m.

8 p.m. – Spanish

11 p.m. (Midnight Mass w/carols at 10:15 p.m.)

Christmas Day – Thursday, Dec. 25

8 a.m.

10 a.m.

Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God

Jan. 1, 2016 (not a Holy Day of Obligation)

9 a.m.



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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.

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2015

“There Is No Better Way for Our Students to Learn About the Country in Which They Live” *Our Presentation School Update*

As Presentation Parish School technology teacher Ron Hurick sees it, he has been **privileged** to go on the annual eighth-grade class trip several times.

“This year, the class went to Washington, D.C., Philadelphia, and New York City,” he says. “In recent years, our trips have been east, especially to the D.C. area. It is an area so rich with history and so full of things to see and experience. Living in California, for many of them this may be the only time in their lives that they see these important places in our country.”

The trips are what Presentation School calls a “living classroom” – that is, a certified teacher meets them and serves as a guide and instructor. Most of the sightseeing is done on foot. As Mr. Hurick notes, the students averaged seven miles a day.



“I see this through the students’ eyes,” he says. “Of course, the monuments and buildings and government in action are impressive to them. However, I think what struck them the most was the Changing of the Guard at Arlington National Cemetery.”

Mr. Hurick also notes how the trip followed a similar path to that of Pope Francis during his visit to our country.

“The other moment that seemed to produce squeals of delight was driving along the harbor in New York City with the Statue of Liberty on the right and the Empire State Building on the left,” he says. “There is no better way for our students to learn about the country in which they live. They get an appreciation for whom and what we are.”