

Feast of the Holy Family

Pope Francis once said that as a child, he heard a story of a family with a mother, father, many children and a grandfather. The grandfather, suffering from Parkinson's illness, would drop food on the dining table, and smear it all over his face when he ate. His son considered it disgusting. Hence, one day he bought a small table and set it off to the side of the dining hall so the grandfather would eat, make a mess and not disturb the rest of the family. One day, the Pope said, the grandfather's son came home and found one of his sons playing with a piece of wood. "What are you making?" he asked his son. "A table," the son replies. "Why?" the father asks. "It's for you, Dad, when you get old like grandpa, I am going to give you this table." Ever since that day, the grandpa was given a prominent seat at the dining table and all the help he needed in eating by his son and daughter-in-law. "This story has done me such good throughout my life," said Pope Francis. "Grandparents are a treasure," he said. "Often old age isn't pretty, right? There is sickness and all that, but the wisdom our grandparents have is something we must welcome as an inheritance." A society or community that does not value, respect and care for its elderly members "doesn't have a future because it has no memory, it's lost its memory," Pope Francis added.

On the last Sunday of the year, we celebrate the Feast of the Holy Family. We are here to offer all the members of our own families on the altar for God's blessing. The first reading is a commentary on the fourth commandment: "Honor your father and your mother." Sirach reminds children of their duty to honor their parents – even when it becomes difficult. He also mentions the five-fold reward which God promises to those who honor their father and mother. The first reward is "riches," and the second long life: Forgiveness of sins and God's prompt answer to prayers are the fourth and fifth rewards. Paul, in the letter to the Colossians, advises us that we should put on love and remain thankful in our relationships with one another. Paul teaches that children should learn and practice noble qualities like compassion, kindness, forgiveness and sharing in the warmth of the family. Today's Gospel describes how Joseph presented Mary and the Child Jesus in the Temple for the ritual of the mother's purification and the child's "presentation."

Although more emphasis is given in the first two readings on the obligation of children to their parents, there is a profound lesson here for parents too. "Like father like son" is an old saying, and very often true. If the parents fail to do what is right and just in the sight of God, they can hardly complain if their children turn out disobedient to God and to them. The young learn more from example than from precept. If parents give their children the example of a life of obedience to the laws of God and their country, the children will in turn carry out their duties to God, to their parents and to their fellowman.

A few years ago, a study was undertaken to find the U.S. city with the lowest incidence of cancer and heart disease. The winner was Rosetto, Pennsylvania. Soon experts descended upon the city expecting to see a town populated by non-smokers, people who ate the correct food, took regular exercise and kept close track of their cholesterol. To their great surprise, however, the researchers discovered that none of the above was true. They found instead that the city's good health was tied to the close family bonds that prevailed within the community. This suggests that there is much to be said for a close and loving family relationship.

(Source: Homilies of Fr. Anthony Kadavil)

Electronic Funds Transfer
IT MAKES EVERY SUNDAY COUNT!
Application Forms are in the back of the church

Saint Augustine Catholic Church

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www.staugustineoakland.com

Office phone number (510) 653-8631

Joy to the world

Most people are familiar with the Christmas Carol, 'Joy to the world.' The words are by English hymn writer Isaac Watts, based on the second half of Psalm 98 in the Bible. The song celebrates what Christmas is about. It is all about joy.

People at times get stressed out during Christmas – shopping, decorations, gift-giving, dinners, parties, attending religious services and so on. It is important to take stress out of Christmas and enjoy this 'most beautiful time of the year'.

Jesus was born in a stable with no fanfare or celebrity status. Angels sang at his birth, 'glory to God in the highest and on earth people of good will.' There were some visitors, shepherds and the magi. Jesus parents were not stressed out, except perhaps for finding a place for the birth of the messiah. There are no details in the Bible as to how distressed or desolate or abandoned they felt finding 'no room in the inn.' Whatever it be, they took it all in stride and things worked out because they had Jesus.

Saint Therese of Lisieux puts it beautifully: "I feel that my mission is about to begin, my mission to make God loved as I love Him, to teach souls my little way." She was asked, "And what is this little way you want to teach to souls?" Therese answered: "it is the way of spiritual childhood, the way of trust and absolute surrender."

The joy of Christmas comes from trust and surrender to God. That is the model Mary and Joseph presents before us; that is what Jesus himself did; that's what all the saints tell us; that is what each one of us is invited to do.

Joy, everyone! Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Father Augustine

Mission Statement

We are called by Christ to love Him, to follow Him and to bring Him to the world.

**St. Augustine Parish Office**

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Please remember in your prayers those who are ill:

Mary Ellen McManus, Virginia Nelson, Fr. Freddie's father, Thomas, Claudia Johnson, Theresa Allevato.

And those who have died:

Marilyn La Placa, Mary Flynn, Rose Thomas, Frankie, Katie Johanni, Catherine Gerrick

MASS INTENTIONS FOR THE WEEK

Saturday, December 26th, 2015, 5:00 p.m.

Parishioners & Benefactors

Sunday, December 27th, 2015 8 a.m.

Arnold Gil Sanchez (+)

Sunday, December 27th, 2015, 10:30 a.m.

Fr. Mark Wiesner (-)

Sunday December 27th, 2015, 6 p.m.

Nancy Ann McGonagle (+)

Stewardship – Weekly Offering

December 20th, 2015: \$2,910 (Includes EFT)

SVDP Stewardship: \$44.76

Ministry Schedule

Wednesday, Dec 30: No RCIA

Friday, Jan 1 @ 10 am: Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

Sunday, Jan 3rd – Faith Formation Christmas Break

Sunday, Jan 3rd - Children's Liturgy of the Word Break

Question of the Week**For Adults:**

What does your family do to honor and respect its older members?

For Children:

Why did Jesus leave the temple? How can Jesus be an example to you?

Job opening: Director for Music Ministry

Saint Augustine Parish, Oakland, seeks a Music Minister. It is a part time paid position. Music minister is responsible for music ministry in the Church. It will include planning and development of the full liturgical cycle, coordinated scheduling, supervision of musicians and volunteers, etc. Candidate must be able to organize and implement events and have flexibility in work hours. It requires weekend work. A more detailed job description can be obtained from the parish.

This is a 15 hours per week position. Salary classification is M-3. Salary is based upon the diocesan scale and depends on qualification and experience.

Please send your cover letter, application and resume to Pastor, Saint Augustine Parish, 400 Alcatraz Ave, Oakland 94609 or email to: pastorachurch@comcast.net . All candidates need to fill out the application form completely.

Application form is found at the following website: <http://www.oakdiocese.org/offices/human-resources/employment/personnel-policies-for-responschanceries-and-parishes/AppendixD15%20Application.pdf>

Christ the Light Jubilee Year of Mercy Major Events**Early 2016**

Pilgrimages to the Cathedral of Christ the Light
For parishes, groups and individuals begin

March 4-5, 2016

“24 Hours for the Lord”

The Cathedral of Christ the Light and Deaneries/Parishes

November 20, 2016: 10 a.m.

Mass - Conclusion of the Jubilee of Mercy

The Cathedral of Christ the Light - Bishop Michael Barber, S.J., Celebrant

Dates to Remember

Thursday, December 24th, Children's Mass at 5 pm.

Thursday, December 24th, Midnight Mass starting at 11:30 pm with Lessons and Carols

Friday, December 25th, Christmas Mass at 10:30 am.

There is no 8 am Mass on Christmas Day.

Friday, January 1st, Solemnity of Mary Mass at 10 am.

Weekly Worship Schedule**Saturday Vigil**

5:00 p.m.

Sunday Eucharist

8:00 a.m. 10:30 a.m. 6:00 p.m.

Weekday Eucharist

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

8:30 a.m.

Communion Service

Wednesday 8:30 a.m.

Sacrament of Reconciliation

Saturday 4 p.m.

From the Office of the Ministry Coordinator

I hope you have all enjoyed a wonderful Christmas. As we celebrate the Christmas season, we can focus on the Holy Family as an example for our life. The opportunity to offer love and mercy for each other is what Pope Francis reminds of us often. “In your family, say Please, Thank you, and I am sorry”.

Our Faith Formation and Children's Liturgy of the Word programs are on Christmas break. When we return in the New Year any children who are currently in the 2nd and 3rd grade who have not received the Sacraments of Reconciliation and Holy Communion will begin preparation. If your children are not yet signed up to begin this preparation, please contact me as soon as possible.

56 Ways to Be Merciful During the Jubilee Year of Mercy

#5 Learn to say this prayer: “Dear Lord, bless (annoying person's name) and have mercy on me.

#7 Do something kind and helpful for someone who you don't get along with, or who has wronged you.

Visit our new Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/St-Augustine-Catholic-Church-113260159035124/>

Please continue to pray with me that our Parish community will grow in God's love and holiness. In Christ's love, Karen