



Celebrating the Feast of St. John Apostle and Evangelist

How We Can Honor Our Patron Saint and Follow His Sainly Example

When Christmas Day is over, here at St. John Apostle and Evangelist, we get to turn around for more celebrations — the feast day of our parish patron, St. John Apostle and Evangelist. On Saturday, Dec. 27, we will celebrate with Mass and an afternoon meal in the parish community center.

Deacon Mike Browning has been a member of the parish for about 30 years. There have been different ways of celebrating this day over the years, but what's been consistent is that it's celebrated. As Deacon Mike says, it's important that we get to know St. John and his role.

"I want us all to understand St. John's role in the Church more fully — why he was chosen, and what that means for us," he says. "The title 'Beloved' isn't just for St. John — it's for all of God's people."

St. John is believed to have authored the Gospel of John, three letters, and Revelation. In the Gospel, he refers to himself as "the one whom Jesus loved." Along with Peter and James, he is considered one of Jesus' closest friends. He was the only Apostle at the foot of the Cross during the crucifixion.

"St. John was very close to Christ and Mary," Deacon Mike says. "At the foot of the cross, Jesus said, 'Mother, behold your son. Son, behold your mother.' John represents all of us — he was given that call to care for Mary and share Christ's love with the world. He was an evangelist — not only through his words, but through his actions."

Deacon Mike encourages people to use the feast day as an opportunity to learn more about St. John Apostle and Evangelist.



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Thanksgiving:

A SECULAR HOLIDAY WITH SACRED SIGNIFICANCE

Thanksgiving is a cherished holiday in the United States, celebrated on the fourth Thursday of November each year. While it may not have religious origins, Thanksgiving holds a deep significance in the Catholic Church and serves as a perfect example of living the stewardship way of life. As Catholics, we can find spiritual meaning in this holiday and apply the principles of stewardship to our Thanksgiving celebrations.

Thanksgiving and Stewardship

Stewardship is a core principle in the Catholic faith, emphasizing the responsible and generous use of time, talent, and treasure for the service of God and others. Thanksgiving aligns with this principle in several ways:

- **Gratitude to God:** Thanksgiving encourages us to express gratitude for the blessings we have received. In the Catholic faith, acknowledging and thanking God for His gifts is a fundamental aspect of stewardship.
- **Sharing with Others:** The act of sharing a meal with loved ones and providing for those in need echoes the spirit of stewardship. Just as stewards share their resources with others, Thanksgiving prompts us to share our abundance with family, friends, and the less fortunate.
- **Acknowledging God's Creation:** Thanksgiving often centers around a feast featuring the fruits of the earth. This feast reminds us of our role as stewards of God's creation and our responsibility to care for the environment.

Living Stewardship on Thanksgiving and Beyond

Here are ways Catholics can live the stewardship way of life on Thanksgiving:

- **Gratitude and Prayer:** Begin your Thanksgiving celebrations with a prayer of thanksgiving, acknowledging God's providence and expressing gratitude for His blessings. Encourage everyone to share what they are thankful for during the meal.
- **Sharing with Others:** Reach out to those in need by volunteering at a local shelter, donating food, or participating in charitable initiatives. Sharing your time, talent, or treasure is a practical application of stewardship.
- **Family and Community:** Thanksgiving is an excellent time to strengthen family bonds and build a sense of community. Welcome those who may be alone or in need, extending the spirit of stewardship to your own household and beyond.
- **Gratitude Journal:** Encourage family members to maintain a gratitude journal throughout the year. Documenting daily blessings reinforces the stewardship principle of recognizing and appreciating God's gifts.

Thanksgiving may be a secular holiday, but its significance in the Catholic Church is profound. It provides an opportunity to express gratitude to God, share blessings with others, and practice stewardship in daily life. As Catholics, we can embrace the principles of stewardship on Thanksgiving by focusing on gratitude, charity, and environmental responsibility. This holiday serves as a beautiful reminder that living the stewardship way of life is not confined to the church walls but can be incorporated into our everyday lives, enriching our faith and our relationship with God.

A Time of Faithful Celebration and Sharing in Thanks

Dear Parishioners,

As I look over the calendar for November, my mind is filled with thoughts of thanksgiving. These aren't just thoughts about Thanksgiving Day, although I look towards it with happy anticipation — more than that, they are thoughts filled with a variety of reasons for why we should be thankful.

The month began with a great celebration that should be a day of thanksgiving for all of us — All Saints' Day. This is a great feast celebrating the great company of Christians now in heaven — a company we shall eventually join, whether we're formally canonized, if we remain faithful to Christ.

And the communion of saints — the sharing of spiritual goods by those in heaven to us who are still in our pilgrimage — is a great cause for thanksgiving. We read the lives of the saints to be encouraged and inspired by their examples. Plus, we are strengthened by their fellowship in the Body of Christ, and we are aided by their prayers.

And then, the very next day, we celebrated All Souls' Day. Although this day commemorates all the faithful departed who are being purified in Purgatory, it is natural for us to concentrate on the members of our own family and our friends who have died. While we pray for them, that they may soon experience the joys of heaven, at the same time we also are thankful for the love they gave us and



for the faith they passed on to us.

Then, later in the month comes Thanksgiving Day, the national holiday celebrating all the things for which we are thankful. The fact that it comes toward the end of autumn reminds us that it was originally a harvest festival. For Christians today, it's a wholesome reminder that we should thank God for everything we receive, especially the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ. Why not participate in the Church's Great Thanksgiving, the Holy

Eucharist, on Thanksgiving Day? It's the ultimate way to give thanks.

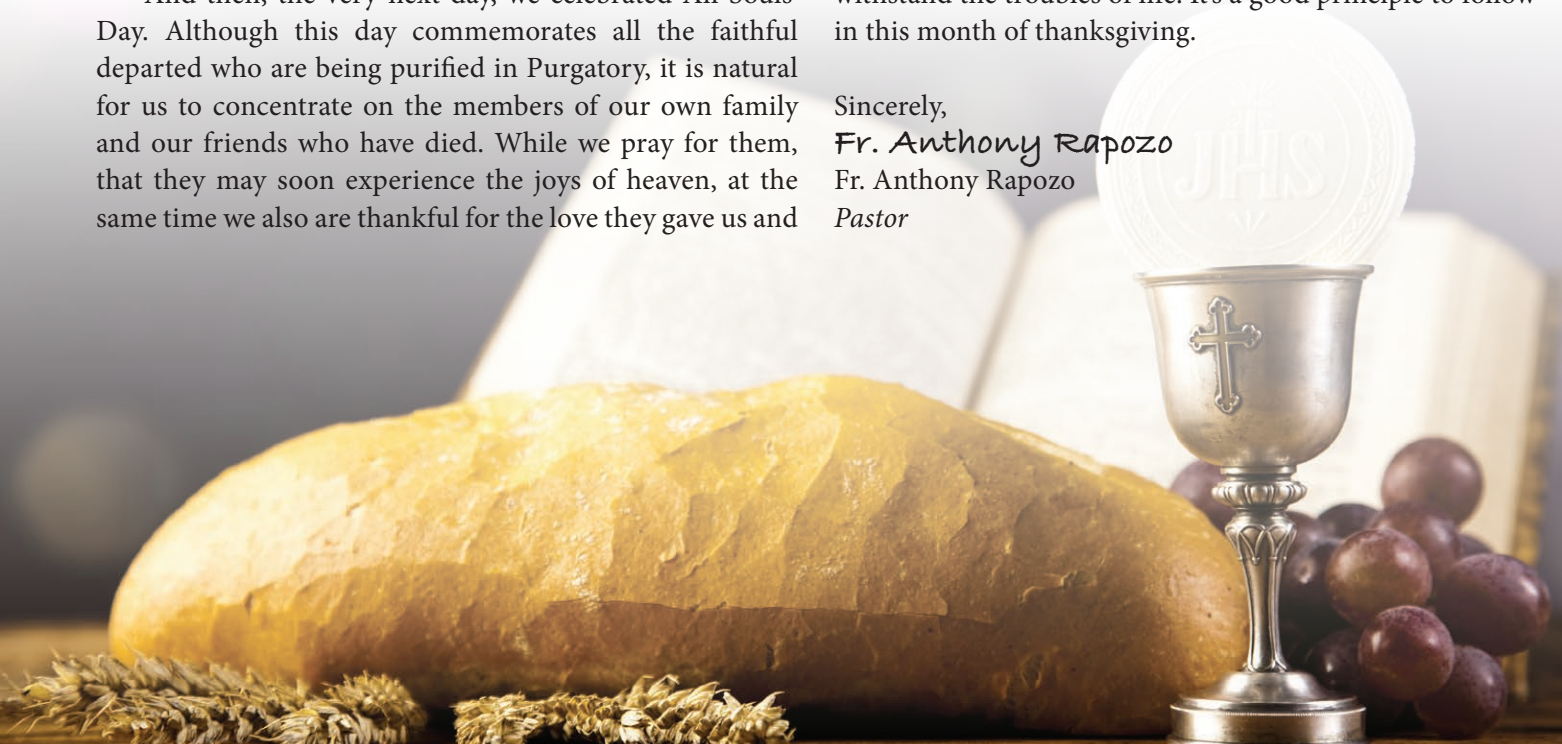
A reminder — while much of our attention may lately be drawn to the often-contentious goings-on in our country, we need to remember that God oversees the universe, even though He has given us free will. If we trust in His loving care, demonstrated by returning to Him a portion of the time, talent, and treasure He has entrusted to us, we can withstand the troubles of life. It's a good principle to follow in this month of thanksgiving.

Sincerely,

Fr. Anthony Rapozo

Fr. Anthony Rapozo

Pastor



Growing in Faith This Advent — How We Can

At the end of November, the Church enters the beautiful season of Advent. It is a time of joyful preparation — the world waits. We are invited to pause amid the busyness of the world and prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ. The Advent wreath candles stand for hope, joy, peace, and love. This Advent, let us renew all four of these and prepare for our Emmanuel.

Fr. Anthony Rapozo encourages parishioners to use Advent not for shopping or attending parties, but for preparing your heart for Christmas.

“Advent is a time for introspection and spiritual preparation for both the celebration of Jesus’ birth and His awaited Second Coming,” Fr. Anthony says.

We all know how fast time goes. With all the busyness of December, it goes even faster. Don’t get swept away by all the events and preparations this month. Instead, be intentional about how you approach and observe this season.

“The intentional observance of Advent offers a spiritual anchor that connects believers to the deeper meaning of Christmas,” Fr. Anthony says. “Without intentionality, Advent can become a missed opportunity for spiritual growth and reflection. Deliberate observance helps

Christians engage with the profound theological themes of the season.”

So how do we engage and grow this Advent? What are some recommendations? It’s simple, says Fr. Anthony — engage in prayer and service.

“Prayer invites reflection, confession, and a desire for spiritual peace, while acts of service promote love, empathy, and a focus on Christ’s teachings, ultimately helping to move the focus away from holiday distractions towards the true meaning of the season,” he says.

An easy way to promote prayer at home is to have your own Advent wreath. Each Sunday, light a candle and do a reading as a family. Another recommendation from Fr. Anthony is to say a prayer each time you see Christmas lights — “Jesus, may your love create light in my life today”.

“Another idea is to pray for a different person each day of Advent,” Fr. Anthony says. “Write the names of family, friends, or others you want to pray for on slips of paper and pull one each day as a reminder.”

Fr. Anthony also recommends practicing Acts of Mercy. Make a calendar with a new act of kindness each



Can Engage in the Season and Prepare to Welcome the Christ Child

day. Set up a Nativity scene and add a piece of straw for each completed act of kindness. Find a way to visit the lonely and support those in need.

“By incorporating small, daily or weekly rituals, families and individuals can create a sacred space to prepare for the spiritual meaning of Christmas,” Fr. Anthony says.

Here at St. John Apostle and Evangelist, we have ways to serve and grow in faith. St. John will be collecting toys and presents for Catholic Charities' Kauai office. We will also be working with Cross Catholic Outreach to raise funds to build homes for families in Guatemala as part of our Advent mission.

As the season of Advent approaches, take Fr. Anthony's advice and prepare for the birth of Jesus.

“My message would be that we all approach this season not with the frantic pace of the world, but with an intentional sense of spiritual preparation,” he says.

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— Fr. Anthony Rapozo



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“I hope we dig deeper and get more involved in understanding our patron saint, fill ourselves with his life,” he says. “I hope we ask, ‘What is our calling? How do we follow in the footsteps of the Beloved?’”

Furthermore, Deacon Mike hopes to launch catechesis training on St. John in 2026. A pilgrimage to follow St. John's life is also in the works.

Feast days are a yearly opportunity to honor and learn more about the saints. They remind us that we are called to holiness and that we can all become saints.

“And when we look at the saints, we have to remember they weren't perfect people,” Deacon Mike says. “They were human, flawed, and obedient to God's call.”

Take the opportunity to learn more about St. John Apostle and Evangelist and other saints. You can research to find saints who share your name, birthday, anniversary, etc.

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— Deacon Mike Browning

Join us for the feast day celebrations on Saturday, Dec. 27. See the bulletin for more information.



“THE WOMAN WHO ALWAYS PRAYS”:

ST. ROSE PHILIPPINE DUCHESNE

On Nov. 18, we celebrate the feast day of St. Rose Philippine Duchesne. During her long life of service, she confronted many hardships, and played an important role in bringing the Catholic faith to the new American frontier. Her endless devotion to prayer and lifelong desire to help those in need provides us with a beautiful example of stewardship and faith in the face of great adversity.

Born on Aug. 29, 1769 in Grenoble, France, to a prominent lawyer, the young Philippine was educated by tutors and her own mother, as well as by the Visitation nuns in Grenoble. By 1788, the 19-year-old Philippine had become completely devoted to the Catholic faith, and she joined the Convent of the Visitation — by some accounts, against her family's wishes.

However, by 1792, the convent was closed due to the Reign of Terror during the French Revolution — an era that witnessed the outlawing of all religious organization in France. While no longer a member of a convent, Philippine remained fully active in providing service and ministering to those in need — even selflessly putting herself at great risk by helping to hide priests from the Revolutionaries.

By the time the Reign of Terror ended and the Concordat between Napoleon and Pope Pius VII was signed in 1801, Philippine attempted to restart the convent, but without success. However, in 1804, she learned of the Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and with several of her companions, became a novice in the Society. By 1815, Philippine was elected secretary general of the Society, but had already expressed a strong desire to minister outside of France and Europe.

Such an opportunity was presented just three years later, as Bishop William Dubourg requested missionaries at his large diocese in Louisiana. Philippine, along with a group of four companions, sailed to New Orleans in May 1818. By that September, Philippine and her companions had opened

the first free school for girls located west of the Mississippi.

While Philippine found great difficulty adjusting to an unfamiliar culture in what was still largely uncharted North American territory, she nevertheless continued to oversee several struggling convents. And despite her uneasiness with the language and culture, Philippine worked to maintain a unified spirit within the Society as it spread throughout the new American territory.

By the early 1840s, Philippine decided to join her companions in the Society at a reservation of the Potawatomi nation, in Sugar Creek, Kan. A major influence on this decision was Philippine's disgust with the treatment of the native people on behalf of the American government. She felt that by serving the reservation, she could concentrate on ministry and prayer in a setting far removed from European influence.

Unfortunately, Philippine's health had already begun to fail, and at Sugar Creek she could do little more than continually pray in the reservation chapel. Nevertheless, her strong faith and spirit profoundly moved the Potawatomi people, and they affectionately referred to her as Kwahkahanumad, or "the woman who always prays."

As her health continued to deteriorate, Philippine was soon recalled from Sugar Creek. She would spend the final 10 years of her life quietly working to spread the Catholic faith throughout North America. Philippine died on Nov. 18, 1852. Her companion, Anna du Rousier, was by her side at her death. Anna would carry the mission of the Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus into South America, assuring that Philippine's faithful devotion to ministry and prayer would continue to inspire and influence long after her passing.

In recognition of Philippine's contributions to the Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, as well as to the spread of the Catholic faith in North America, she was beatified on May 12, 1940. And on July 3, 1988, St. Rose Philippine Duchesne was canonized.

MEET THE Greeters AND Ushers

Creating a Welcoming and Friendly Environment for All Who Enter Our Church

When you walk into St. John Apostle and Evangelist to attend Sunday Mass, you will likely be greeted with a warm welcome and a smile. These individuals are part of our Greeter and Usher Ministry, who seek to create a hospitable environment for parishioners and visitors. Dennis Tulang is one of our committed members who leads the ministry.

"I've helped in several ministries and being an usher is one of the best ones I have been in," Dennis says. "One of the main reasons is that I get to know a lot of my fellow parishioners. You can go to Mass for years and sit around people you see every Sunday and just never get to know them."

One of the four pillars of stewardship, hospitality is a necessary component of our lives as Catholics and part of establishing the ohana in our parish community. The ministry helps to foster this hospitality through welcoming anyone who walks through our doors, whether it's for the first time or the thousandth time.

"It's such a delight to know more of our parishioners," Dennis says. "Being more ohana is very much gratifying."

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit and restrictions were put in place, Dennis could no longer be in the choir, of which he'd been a part for over 20 years. He was involved in a few other ministries as well, most of which had to disperse. At the same time, the parish needed more people to help out with ushering due to the new component of Mass registrations and seating arrangements for spacing the congregation.

"I decided to join and it's been such a blessing for me



since then," Dennis says.

Having the responsibility of helping with the registration and seating, Dennis began learning more about his fellow parishioners. He appreciated the opportunity to do so and continues to enjoy the blessing of being involved.

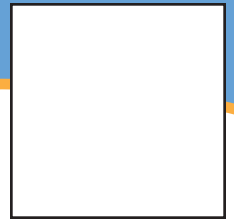
The ushers and greeters' responsibilities go beyond the front doors of the church. They are the first to open up the church doors and restrooms, turn on the lights, and help set up the facility for the congregation to gather.

Before Mass begins, the members help with placing the candles for sale, assisting people to their spots and directing them around the church, and present leis to special guests. During Mass, the ministry members collect the offertory and help any latecomers find spots during the liturgy. They ensure donations are managed appropriately and store them securely. They also guide parishioners during the Communion distribution and hand out the newsletter at the end of Mass. After Mass, they help parishioners leaving the building and close up before the next Mass.

The ministry helps our parishioners feel welcome. Whether someone is a visitor or longtime member of the congregation, it is important that we greet with a warm welcome and sense of belonging.

"Parishioners need to be welcome," Dennis says. "They need to be part of the community. Knowing people more as a family, I think it creates a greater bond for the whole of the parish community. Not only are you together worshipping, but also you are with people that you know and have a bond together with."

Interested parishioners can get involved by contacting the parish office at 808-623-3332 or Dennis Tulang at tulangd808@gmail.com.



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Advent and Christmas Mass Schedule