



Drawing Near to the “Christ Child” Through Misa de Gallo

When Fr. Ramon Francisco was growing up, he went to the Misa de Gallo celebration yearly with his family. It was a truly beautiful time that nurtured the powerful seed of faith in his young heart. To this day, he cherishes the memory of honoring the Christ Child through this extraordinary devotion, and he does all he can to spread the joy of it to others.

“It was such a wonderful experience to go as a child,” Fr. Ramon says. “It means so much to us Filipinos, and we look forward to it every year.”

Misa de Gallo is a nine-day celebration leading up to Christmas Day. The term “Misa de Gallo” directly translates from Spanish as “rooster Mass.” It is also known as the “dawn Mass.”

“The name of the celebration comes from a time when there used to be no clocks, and people would listen for the first crow of the rooster in the morning,” Fr. Ramon says. “Then they would know it was time to wake up and go to Mass. Spanish missionaries originally introduced the devotion to the people of the Philippines, where they now celebrate it by having Mass every day at 4 a.m. from Dec. 16 to Dec. 24 in order to prepare their hearts for Christmas. They also have Christmas caroling and ringing of bells. In the States, Filipinos are often convincing their parish pastor to honor the Misa de Gallo tradition.”

At our own parish, Misa de Gallo was requested by the Filipino members of our church family, and it is well attended by Filipino Catholics in the area. From Dec. 16 to Dec. 24, we will have a Mass at 5 a.m., celebrated by our parish priests, local Filipino priests, and Bishop Larry Silva. Following each Mass, there will be a festive celebration featuring a potluck of Filipino breakfast foods.



Fr. Ramon at Sacred Heart, Waianae on Christmas Eve 2015

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Being a Good Christmas Steward

The Christmas season is fast approaching. We have already made our gift lists, and perhaps even checked them twice. First on the list is family, followed by friends, our children's teachers and coaches, and maybe even the mailman. Christmas inspires us to give our family and friends gifts of love and appreciation, in gratitude towards all they do for us during the year. The very idea of holiday gift giving – a display of love and gratefulness to those who have touched our lives – is parallel to the concept of stewardship. When we give to God, we are effectively saying “thanks” for all He has done for us.

Think of all God has done for you this year. How have His loving arms embraced you? Maybe He has answered a special prayer intention. Maybe He has created a job opportunity for an unemployed loved one. He may have helped safely bring a new baby into the family, or instilled peace during a particularly difficult time. God's blessings are countless, and the abundant gifts He bestows upon us are given freely out of incomprehensible love – despite our unworthiness.

Think of the ways you respond to God's bountiful blessings. How do you choose to show Him your thankfulness? As we prepare for the coming of Christ

during Advent, will we remember to add Jesus' name to our list? Uncle John wants a new drill, and Grandpa definitely needs a new cardigan – but what does Jesus want? It is His birthday we are celebrating, after all.

The very first name on the list – above our spouse, children, relatives, and friends – should be God's name. As disciples of Christ, we are called to give God our “first fruits,” not our leftovers. We should joyfully place God first on our gift-giving lists, not out of guilt or as an afterthought, but out of love and appreciation.

Stewardship allows us to tangibly give a Christmas gift to God through our time, talent and treasure. We give God gifts of time through prayer, such as spending time before the Blessed Sacrament or praying the Rosary. We can give our talents to God by way of simple charitable actions, such as bringing a meal to a hard-pressed neighbor, or watching a young mother's children so that she is able to prepare for her own family's Christmas celebration. And as for treasure, we can give God a portion of our income this Christmas by dropping an extra dollar in the collection basket. Whatever choices you make this season, make the decision to be a good Christmas steward.

As we prepare for the coming of Christ during Advent, will we remember to add Jesus' name to our list? Uncle John wants a new drill, and Grandpa definitely needs a new cardigan – but what does Jesus want? It is His birthday we are celebrating, after all.



A Letter From Our Pastor

Advent: Moving Toward a Time of Fulfilled Hope

Dear Parishioners,

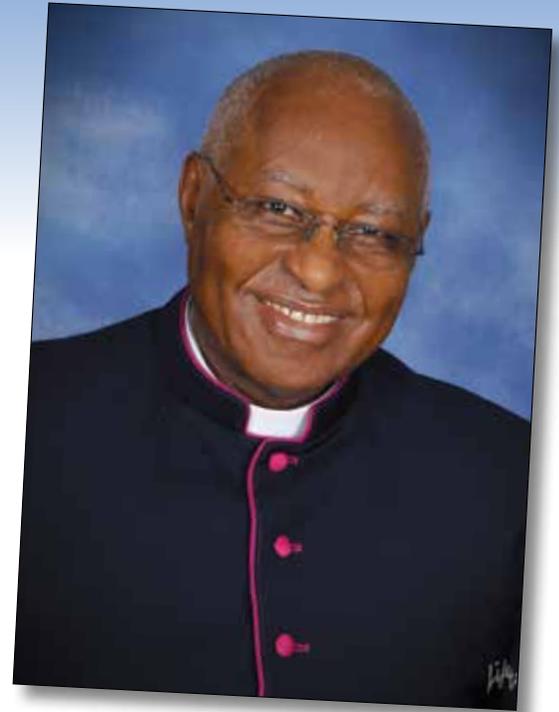
There is never a time during the year when we cannot pause and reflect on who and what we are and how we conduct our lives, both as a parish and as people of God. But this time of year in particular lends itself to just that.

Advent is often called “a season of hope.” However, it is more than that. We have choices and decisions to make at this time. This is the time when we must acknowledge the need for us to change attitudes and to welcome the light of Christ’s presence. In this way, we can contribute to bringing hope to a world that is starved for hope.

Of course, we approach this time of year with a spirit of confident expectation, but now is the time for us to be awake to Christ, Whose presence is revealed as forgiveness, Whose peace reconciles our differences, and Whose hope should strengthen and lift up our hearts.

We have pointed out that each and every day is an opportunity for a new beginning. Our new Church liturgical year began on the First Sunday of Advent. We understand that Advent is a time of preparation for the celebration of the Nativity of our Lord – Christmas – but I would remind you that it is much more than that for us Catholics and Christians.

It is a time for us to prepare for Christ’s Second Coming, as well. Much of what we do, our Scripture readings, our prayers, our traditions are built on that reality. One of the traditions in our Church and in many of our homes is an Advent wreath. That custom is filled with meaning. The wreath tends to be circular in shape with four candles – three purple and one rose. The color purple is very evident at this time of year, just as it is during



Lent. Purple represents prayer, penance, sacrifice, and good works.

On the Third Sunday of Advent, though, we light the rose candle. That is Gaudete Sunday, a day of rejoicing. Throughout Advent, the candles are lit in progression each week. This builds on the idea of expectation and hope that we may see as Christ’s first coming into the world, but we must also keep in mind that, at the same time, we are anticipating His Second Coming. We cannot ask ourselves often enough, “Are we ready?” Jesus and St. Paul and others remind us often that we do not and cannot know the time and the place.

The point is that the time is now for us. Yes, this is a time of hope, but we are heading toward a time of fulfilled hope. God bless you and yours at this special time of year.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Msgr. John S. Mbinda
Pastor



“Nothing Less Than Mission” Our St. John Apostle & Evangelist

You may have heard the term “parish mission” spoken throughout our community. But what exactly does that mean? According to *Our Sunday Visitor*, “A mission is an event where God’s Word is proclaimed through the Bible and Catholic doctrine, as well as through the life, learning, and personal experience of the facilitators. A fruitful parish mission will increase bonding among parishioners; people may not know those who go to other Masses; but during a parish mission, the whole parish is doing something together.”

On the weekend of Dec. 10-11 and on the evenings of Monday, Dec. 12, Tues., Dec. 13, and Wed. Dec. 14 at 7 p.m., we will host a parish mission open to all the people of the parish and their guests. Deacons Eddie Ensley and Robert Herrmann will conduct the mission. The deacons have been giving missions at parishes for more than 30 years.

We are blessed to have two such outstanding facilitators – both are Deacons of the Diocese of Savannah, Georgia. As their own Bishop, Most Reverend Gregory Hartmayer OFM Conv, has said, “I was a pastor in the Archdiocese of Atlanta for many years, and during that time, I would invite priests, theologians and others to conduct retreats or missions for the people. Upon learning of Deacon Eddie Ensley and reading a few of his books, I invited him and Robert to conduct retreats and missions over the course of a few years. The members of my parish and I were blessed by their presence, their message of love, acceptance of others, forgiveness and hope and joy of our faith.”

As Deacon Ensley notes, a primary purpose of a parish mission is to draw all the members of the parish community together.

“It recharges the congregation,” he says. “All those who attend take time for the truly important things like wonder, mystery and prayer. People reconcile. Faith is awakened. Vocations are discovered. Families are healed. Lives are forever changed. Our parish mission will enable the congregation to discover afresh its ultimate calling and meaning. Nothing less than miracles can happen! Miracles of the heart!”



Deacons Robert Herrmann and Eddie Ensley

Deacon Robert Herrmann explains the focus of the mission sessions.

“We will speak at all the Masses the weekend before so people can see who we are, get a taste,” he says. “Of course, there is more to each evening session than we can outline here. The overall theme is “Drawing Closer to God and Letting God’s Love Heal Us.” In a nutshell, session one deals with ‘How do we handle the everyday stresses and pressures of life, a key to letting God lighten our load?’ The second session looks to our Blessed Mother as we speak to ‘How to cope with life losses, how to respond to life’s challenges, and how each of us can follow Jesus in genuine discipleship.’ We also examine prayer in our busy lives. Finally, on the last night we address ‘Forgiving as God forgives,’ reconciliation and how to heal our relationships – this is a penance service.”

As we strive to live out stewardship in our community, our parish mission is a great way to do just that. It is the hope of those of us planning the mission that people will take some time during the week of Dec. 12 to attend all or some of the Mission events. The people of the parish are

Miracles Can Happen!"

1st Advent Mission on Dec. 10-14

"All those who attend take time for the truly important things like wonder, mystery and prayer. People reconcile. Faith is awakened. Vocations are discovered. Families are healed. Lives are forever changed. Our parish mission will enable the congregation to discover afresh its ultimate calling and meaning. Nothing less than miracles can happen! Miracles of the heart!" – Deacon Eddie Ensley

free to invite others to come. We can together gain deeper insight into what it means to be Catholic and how we can better bring the message of Christ to others.

This is such an opportunity for us to enrich our Advent this year. Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, has called on all of us to do something special this year. "If we have a problem in this world, it is indifference," says the pope. "I greatly desire that all those places where the Church is present, each and every parish, may become islands of mercy in the midst of the sea of indifference."

For more information on the mission, please refer to the parish bulletin, or call the parish office at 808-623-3332.

Drawing Near to the "Christ Child" Through Misa de Gallo continued from front cover

"Filipinos are very used to this devotion, and they thirst for it," Fr. Ramon says. "It helps them to feel at home and reminds them of their faith and native culture. It gives them time to quiet themselves, and enjoy a time of silent reflection. It is a great way to take time to reflect, meditate, and pray together as a family. It is also a good community fellowship opportunity."

This year, come and savor the serene presence of Our Lord in the Eucharist, who came to us humbly as a Child, at the Misa de Gallo celebration. For more information, please contact the parish office at 808-623-3332.

2016 Misa de Gallo Mass Celebrants:

*Friday, Dec. 16 - Msgr. John Mbinda
Saturday, Dec. 17 - Fr. Rex Silveria
Sunday, Dec. 18 - Fr. Ramon Francisco
Monday, Dec. 19 - Fr. Edmund Barut
Tuesday, Dec. 20 - Fr. Sam Loterte
Wednesday, Dec. 21 - Fr. Rheo Ofalsa
Thursday, Dec. 22 - Fr. Bong Ago
Friday, Dec. 23 - Bishop Larry Silva
Saturday, Dec. 24 - Msgr. John Mbinda*

A Modern Model of Sainthood

St. Teresa of Calcutta

In the dark final years of the Cold War, a small woman — standing at barely five feet tall — offered a living counternarrative to the inhibiting fear undergirding our daily lives and our foreign affairs. Instead of living in fear, Mother Teresa acted out of love. Instead of withdrawing and isolating herself, she gave tirelessly to others.

Many of us harbor a personal connection to this saint, for we lived during the height of the media coverage of Mother Teresa’s work and her friendships with Pope St. John Paul II and the beloved Princess Diana.

Long before she received the name Mother Teresa and the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979, Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu was born on Aug. 26, 1910, in Skopje, Macedonia, the crossroads of the Balkans. The youngest of three children, Mother Teresa was raised predominately by her mother after her father’s death, when she was about 8 years old. Dranfile (Drana) Bojaxhiu, Mother Teresa’s mother, undoubtedly became a strong influence on her daughter’s vocation, since Drana herself was a devout Catholic and known for her prayer life and her charity.

Agnes attended a Catholic primary school and, following the example of her mother, became active in their parish and sang in Sacred Heart’s choir. As a young person, Agnes enjoyed reading the lives of the saints — while immersing herself in the stories of these holy men and women, Agnes first felt the stirring call to become a missionary.

At the age of 18, Agnes traveled to Dublin, Ireland, to join the Sisters of Loreto. She became Sr. Mary Teresa, named after St. Thérèse of Lisieux, and began to learn English. Within a few months of arriving in Ireland, she left for India.

In India, Sr. Mary Teresa lived at the Loreto Entally community in Calcutta, where she served as an educator and taught at St. Mary’s School. After her final profession,



she became Mother Teresa and, a few years later, began serving as the school’s principal.

On an ordinary day, Mother Teresa received an extraordinary call. While on a train ride to her annual retreat, Mother Teresa felt what she would describe as Jesus’ thirst for souls. Soon, Jesus called her to found the Missionaries of Charity, an order devoted to serving the “poorest of the poor.”

The order formally began on Oct. 7, 1950, and has grown from one woman tending the sick and dying in the streets of Calcutta to over 4,500 religious sisters helping the poor in over 130 countries around the world.

Additionally, the order grew to include the Missionaries of Charity Brothers, the Missionaries of Charity Fathers and the Lay Missionaries of Charity.

Though externally Mother Teresa joyfully and indefatigably served the poor for nearly 50 years, during the majority of this time, she experienced a “dark night of the soul,” an extensive period of not feeling God’s presence or hearing His voice. Other saints, notably St. John of the Cross, similarly experienced a dark night of the soul. Despite this spiritual struggle, Mother Teresa continued her work joyfully throughout her sickness and until her death on Sept. 5, 1997.

Pope St. John Paul II beatified Mother Teresa in 2003. Fittingly, this year, a pontiff who has underscored the importance of social justice celebrated her canonization. On Sept. 4, 2016, Pope Francis canonized Mother Teresa, the “Saint of the Gutters,” at the Vatican.

St. Teresa of Calcutta offers us an example of ceaseless prayer and selfless service. She is a modern model of sainthood that we can emulate in our daily lives starting with how we serve and treat the other members of our family, our faith community and all those with whom we interact on a daily basis.

St. Teresa of Calcutta, Pray for Us!

St. John Apostle & Evangelist Church

Financial Report for Period Ending Sept. 30, 2016

	Previous Fiscal Year Actual 7/1/2015-9/30/2015	PERIOD ENDING 7/1/2016-9/30/2016		Current Fiscal Year Budget 7/1/2016-6/30/2017
		Actual	Budget	
RECEIPTS				
Sunday Collection	198,638	201,555	216,250	948,500
BEMO	-	16,818		-
Candle Sales	6,529	6,631	7,500	30,000
Social Ministries	2,368	4,821	3,750	15,000
Religious Education	6,845	10,587	2,525	10,100
Occasional Offering/Donations/Other Income	25,664	18,360	10,730	42,920
Fundraising Revenue Subject to GET	408	5,148	2,750	11,000
Interest Income	1,681	2,073	1,525	6,100
Stewardship Development Donations	-	1,670	-	-
TOTAL RECEIPTS	242,133	267,663	245,030	1,063,620
DISBURSEMENTS				
General Operations	88,481	125,236	104,619	418,172
Diocesan Assessment	33,336	35,502	35,502	142,008
Parish Council	-	9,591	20,000	20,000
Rectory	9,075	10,454	11,383	45,532
Property/Facilities	25,263	30,477	22,909	91,636
Liturgy	22,550	22,629	22,248	88,992
Religious Education	34,783	41,821	31,946	127,785
Social Ministry	11,592	9,116	17,037	69,900
Youth Ministry	4,489	9,301	2,086	8,345
Stewardship Development	11,471	13,848	12,812	51,250
TOTAL DISBURSEMENTS	241,040	307,975	280,542	1,063,620
NET OPERATING INCOME (LOSS)	1,093	(40,312)	(35,512)	-
TEMPORARILY RESTRICTED DONATIONS				
Hawaii Catholic Community Foundation: With Grateful Hearts Grant	-			
Stewardship Development	18,109	1,670		
Building Fund Collection (Pre/Future Construction)	3,637	9,220		-
Subtotal of Current Year Donations	21,746	10,890		
Less: Expenses (Net Assets Released to Oper.)	-			
TEMP. RESTRICTED DONATIONS - NET	21,746	10,890		
CHANGE IN NET ASSETS	22,839	(29,422)		

In fulfillment of our stewardship virtues of accountability and transparency, the Parish Finance Council presents the above Year to Date Report

Notes:

- Temporarily restricted donations include grants from Weinberg, Building Funds and With Grateful Hearts. Accounting guidelines encourage nonprofits to recognize donations when pledged/received and to release restrictions when expenses are incurred.
- Change in Net Assets does not include non-cash income - change in value in Land & Building.
- Please direct questions about this report to the Finance Council.

2016 Advent and Christmas Schedule

- Dec. 3** Mililani Holiday Parade
9-10:30 a.m.
- Dec. 8** Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Holy Day of Obligation
Masses at 8 a.m. and 7 p.m.
- Dec. 12-14** Parish Advent Retreat
“Drawing Closer to God and Letting God’s Love Heal Us”
Presenters: Deacon Eddie Ensley and Deacon Robert Herrmann
7 p.m. (Church)
- Dec. 14** Advent Penance Service
7 p.m. (Church)
- Dec. 16** Nativity Play (Sponsored by the Religious Education Department)
7 p.m. (Church)
- Dec. 16-24** Misa de Gallo (Sponsored by Fil-Am Catholic Group)
5 a.m. (Church)
- Dec. 24** No 3:30 p.m. Confession
Christmas Eve Masses
5 p.m. and Midnight
- Dec. 25** Christmas Day Masses
7 a.m., 9 a.m., and 11 a.m.
No 6 p.m. Evening Mass
- Dec. 26** Church Offices Closed
- Dec. 27** St. John Apostle & Evangelist Patron Saint
8 a.m. Mass

