

December 24, 2017 - Vigil of the Nativity of Our Lord

From the Pastor

Reflections on Christmas

"Rorate, caeli, desuper, et nubes pluant justum"

"Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the just." This is the Introit of the Mass of Our Lady during Advent and of the Fourth Sunday of Advent. It presents the beautiful image of the gentle dew and light rain that descends slowly to refresh the parched grass and the flower that germinates on the root of Jesse.

These tender images point to the gentle, loving and providential character of the First Coming of the Word of God in the manger. It is not sudden like the strike of a sword or an earthquake, as is foretold for the Second Coming; rather, our Saviour's coming is clearly foretold in beautiful terms, like that of a tender plant that is nourished by the celestial dew and despite all obstacles, grows under the Sun of Justice. From these tender images, we quickly move to Christmas night, where the prophecies of the Divine birth unfold in a manger in a stable near Bethlehem.

Christmas is a feast of inner peace and joy. We must strive to be as the men of good will who surrounded the improvised crib; we should have the trust and simplicity of the shepherds who believed the angels and adored their God in the manger. We should be as St. Joseph, full of faith and reverence before Jesus and the Blessed Virgin Mary. We should be as Mary, keeping all these things in our hearts and pondering on them. We should be close to Jesus, studying His life in Sacred Scripture and the liturgy, and meditating on the lessons He is teaching us throughout His life. He came so we could imitate Him and thus grow close to Him. Like Him, let us accept poverty, lack of comfort, and humble surroundings, being content with what is necessary. Let us not get caught up in the commercialization of Christmas, which ends up leading to emptiness, greed and sadness. Rather, let us humbly adore the Infant God and be thankful for all He has given us, and show this gratitude by our charity for others.

Sincerely in Christ,



Rev. Charles Van Vliet, FSSP



MERRY CHRISTMAS!

Announcements

Weekend church hours. The church is open for private prayer on Fridays-Sundays as noted below. Please consider committing to one hour of prayer at least one day a month.

Fridays & Saturdays, 4-7 p.m. Sundays, Noon-5:30 p.m.

Saturday work days, 10-4 p.m. If you can spare time on Saturday to assist on parish projects and grounds maintenance, please come at any time during these hours.

Our Lady of Perpetual Help Novena, 6:40 p.m. every Wednesday

Legion of Mary, 7 p.m. every Thursday in the large meeting room, unless noted differently below

2018 FSSP Liturgical Calendars on Sale at the hall table, \$13 each, cash or check. Please make checks payable to Regina Caeli Parish and note "calendar" on the memo line.

Please pick up your 2018 stewardship envelopes if you have not yet done so. If you registered with the parish and do not see a boxed set of envelopes in your name, please contact C.C. Grant or the parish office.

No 11 a.m. Friday Mass at the University of St. Thomas during Christmas break.

Epiphany Home Blessings. A sign up sheet will be available after Christmas for families that would like to have an Epiphany home blessing by a priest. Blessings will be on January 7-9. Priority will be given to families that have never had an Epiphany home blessing or whose homes were flooded during the recent hurricane.

Blessed chalk and home blessing booklets will be made available during the octave days of the Epiphany for those families that would like to conduct their own house blessings.

Sun., Jan. 7, Cookie Sale after the morning Masses, sponsored by Little Flowers Group

No private 7 p.m. Mass on Mon., Jan. 8, to allow both priests to conduct evening home blessings

Christmas through Epiphany Mass Schedules are available on the hall table.

TODAY:

- ~ No 5:30 p.m. Mass. No Vespers,
- ~ No CCD. Classes resume Jan. 7, 2018.
- ~ Final day to make a cash or check donation for Christmas altar flowers

Mon., Dec. 25 and Mon., Jan. 1, Holy days. Please pick up a copy of the Christmas through Epiphany Mass Schedule from the hall table.

A Special Request

Because of your steadfast commitment to this parish and the blessings of our merciful God, Regina Caeli closed its first capital campaign debt free. We can now plan for the urgently needed expansion of our parish complex. A second capital campaign will be launched in the fall of 2018.

If you are able to make an additional year-end contribution to be used as seed money for the upcoming second campaign, please note capital campaign on the donation. Actual pledges for the campaign will come later; however, funds will be needed soon for the preliminary building plans, so please be as generous as you can.

May God, Whose munificence cannot be outdone, reward you.

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Liturgical Calendar & Mass Intentions

December 24 – 30, 2017

Sun., 12/24, Vigil of the Nativity of Our Lord

7:30 a.m., Rev. Joshua Houck, requested by the LeBlancs

10:00 a.m., Pro Populo

Mon., 12/25, The Nativity of Our Lord

12 Midnight, First Mass, Pro Populo

7:30 a.m., Second Mass: At Dawn, RIP Isaura Cabral, requested by Vitalia Cordero

10:00 a.m., Third Mass, RIP Fred Rodriguez, requested by Josie Rodriguez

5:30 p.m., Third Mass, Rev. Charles Van Vliet, requested by the Misner Family

Tues., 12/26, St. Stephen

7:00 p.m., RIP Daniel Richardson, requested by Gretchen Richardson

Wed., 12/27, St. John the Evangelist

6:30 a.m., Baby Hazlewood, requested by Stephen & Elisabeth Hazlewood

Thurs., 12/28, Holy Innocents

7:00 p.m., Rev. Joshua Houck, by a friend

Fri., 12/29, 5th Day in the Octave of Christmas

6:30 a.m., Baby Hazlewood, requested by Stephen & Elisabeth Hazlewood

Sat., 12/30, 6th Day in the Octave of Christmas

7:30 a.m., Baby Hazlewood, requested by Stephen & Elisabeth Hazlewood



First Friday of each month, there is an additional public Mass at 7:00 p.m., followed by First Friday devotion, which includes exposition and benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

First Saturday of each month, First Saturday devotion with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament follows the 7:30 a.m. Mass.

NO 5:30 P.M. MASS ON SUNDAY, DEC. 24

Directory

Parish Office office@reginacaeliparish.org
Open: Mon. & Fri., 8:30-4 p.m.
Telephone: 832-328-0876
To confirm Mass requests or dates:
registrar@reginacaeliparish.org

Pastor Rev. Charles Van Vliet, FSSP
pastor@reginacaeliparish.org

Parochial Vicar Rev. Joshua Houck, FSSP
frjhouck@reginacaeliparish.org

Website reginacaeliparish.org

Parish Organizations

Men's Schola

Practice Wednesday nights, 7 p.m.
Contact: Mark Holt or Kyle Lartigue
schola@reginacaeliparish.org

Altar Society

Contact: Juana Maria Olvera
altarsoc@reginacaeliparish.org

Youth Group

Contact: Rev. Joshua Houck

Contacts for other groups

Please check the bulletin boards or go to the parish website and click on Groups/Ministries

Sacraments

Please check the parish website for more information.

Infant baptism—contact parish at least one month before due date.

Marriage—contact parish eight months before proposed date.

Private Mass Schedule

Mon., Wed. 7:00 p.m.

Tues., Thurs., Sat. 6:30 a.m.

You are welcome to attend private Masses, but they are subject to cancellation if a priest is not available.

Regina Caeli Parish

The Priestly Fraternity of St Peter
Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston



Pastor: Rev. Charles Van Vliet, FSSP
Parochial Vicar: Rev. Joshua Houck, FSSP

Address: 8121 Breen Rd., Houston, Texas 77064

Telephone: 832-328-0876

Website: reginacaeliparish.org

Email: office@reginacaeliparish.org

Mass and Confession Schedule

Sundays 7:30 a.m., 10:00 a.m. (High), 5:30 p.m.

Mon., Wed., Fri. 6:30 a.m.

Tues., Thurs. 7:00 p.m.

Saturdays 7:30 a.m.

Confession 30 minutes before each Mass; ends 5 minutes before Mass starts