From the Desk of Fr. Leo

The family photo-album is not produced very often especially in this present period of cell phones, I-pads and computers, and even then only on very special occasions and only for very special people. Our past is a very intimate part of us. We would not like strangers to "burgle" our bank of youth." When the daughter of the house becomes engaged, it is customary to invite her fiance' to peruse the family album. Here, he will meet his future partner at all the important moments of her past. There will be snap-shots of her as a baby in her mother's arms, sleeping in her cot, playing on the nursery floor, Baptism, birthdays, First Communion, Confirmation, holidays, school outings, graduation, etc. The record seems virtually complete. And yet, in most cases, what is missing from the album is far more important than what it contains. For one thing, the camera catches only the smiles and they were both fleeting and false. There is not a single shot of baby's tantrums and they were far more frequent and furious. The events recorded are all special. Our past has no roving camera to catch



us unawares, doing what we did everyday. There is no film of our sickness and setbacks. There are no tears framed here, no pain, no sorrow.

Strangely, in the infancy narrative, St. Luke put in the album, a different set of pictures of the Holy Family. He does not shy away from the sordid or the sad. The animal eating-through where Mary cradled her baby is included. There is a dark side to each of the events pictured here. The inn keeper's refusal, Herod's death threat, exile in Egypt, Simeon's warning, lost in Jerusalem. The annals that trace the early years of that family between Bethlehem and Nazareth, with its stint as emigrants in a foreign country, fairly reek of poverty and deprivation.

Few would dispute that the family today is a threatened institution. In most developed countries, it is ravaged by divorce. The break-down rate hovers around the fifty percent mark. Parental authority is seriously undermined. Television has replaced the hearth as the focal point in the living rooms. Commercials, beamed into the sanctuary of the home,

raise expectations which many budgets can never hope to satisfy. Even the very young are targeted as potential consumers. While poverty can sometimes be benign, debt often proves malignant. For marriage it can prove terminal. Adversity, on the other hand, only serves to strengthen family ties. Such was the experience of the Holy Family.

If marriage today is in crisis, it may be because we are following the wrong models. Perhaps we have traded the Holy Family for our favorite soap-operas. We should peruse again that family album. Family solidarity comes through in each incident recorded, in bold relief. Mary's concern and care for her child is transparent. Joseph hovers in the background protectively. The danger, the poverty that overshadowed their early marriage, bonded them more closely together.

Fr. Leo Alban Asuncion

Mass Intentions for the Week

| Tues. | December 31 | 4:30PM |
|----------------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Thanksgiving | | Lacsina Family |
| Wed. | January 1 | 9:00AM |
| People of the Parish | | |
| Thur. | January 2 | 11:00AM |
| Special Intentions | | |
| Fri. | January 3 | 11:00AM |
| Thanksgiving | | Ed & Mae |
| <u>Sat.</u> | January 4 | 4:30PM |
| Virgilio Junio † | Buenaflor -Roth | |
| | | Family |
| Sun. | January 5 | 9:00AM |
| Special Intentions | | |
| | | |

| Port Costa | 11:00AM |
|----------------------|---------|
| People of the Parish | |

Sunday Collection -December 22nd

St. Rose, Crockett Christmas \$ St. Patrick Mission

Christmas \$

\$

Thank you again to all who support our Parish! We know how generous you have been in the changing times!

***In able to meet our 2024 budgets, we would like to remind parishioners that we will need a minimum of \$2,100 for Sunday plate collections at St. Rose every weekend, and \$250 every Sunday at St. Patrick Mission. ***

In this season of Christmas, we are reminded to look for the positive, and be thankful for all the things that we do have. In the spirit of this, St. Rose is trying to give back to the community and help those who may need a little more help right now. Please take a moment to consider the many projects below that are going on, as well as ongoing collection of shelf stable food. Keep in mind our Advent themes, and see where you may be able to bring some hope, joy, peace and love to someone else's life.



This year St. Rose would like to support Consider the Homeless (CTH), a grass-roots organization in Berkeley that reaches out to men and women living out on the streets by providing them with food and clothing. One item that is always in need are thick warm socks. If you are able to help support CTH in their effort to those in need, there is a box located in the vestibule of the church where you can drop off your donation of warm men's and women's socks.

In addition to socks, the organization is also looking for new or gently used men's and women's casual shoes. Maybe take a look in your closet and see if there is a pair of shoes that just didn't work out! There is a box in the vestibule right next to the sock box just waiting for them.

Just a reminder of the changes in the Mass schedule for the week of New Years:

SOLEMNITY OF MARY MOTHER OF GOD (New Year)

4:30 P.M. Vigil Mass -St. Rose of Lima, December 31, 2023

9:00 A.M. - New Year's Day Mass St. Rose of Lima, January 1, 2024

There will be no 11:00AM Mass on either of those days.



Office Hours

The office will be closed Tuesday, December 24-Thursday, January 2nd. It will re-open Monday, January 6th.

