St. Patrick’s Catholic Parish
Sonora, California

The GOOD News

. . . in Our Parish

JANUARY 26

They left their nets and followed him.

MATTHEW 4:20

THIRD SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME

“The grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with all of you.”

On behalf of St. Patrick’s Parish, I joyfully welcome you. Our hope is all who come to St. Patrick’s will know the love of Christ. By God’s mercy, and the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and our patron St. Patrick, you will truly encounter the risen Lord and experience the Joy of the Gospel.

If you would like more information about our parish, please visit our website at www.StPatsSonora.org. If you are new to the area, we encourage you to request a new member packet. I would like to meet all of you. I am available for appointments. Please call me at (209) 532-7139 ext. 112 or email frbanka@stpatssonora.org. God bless.

In Christ, Fr. Yesobu Banka, Parish Administrator
A single candle, placed in a darkened winter window, will charm us. Picture it in your mind and then compare it to a room with powerful florescent lights. In the latter, every nook and cranny gets equal light, lots of it. There are no shades of grey. The wrinkles and imperfections of a human face want to run and hide because all their mess is made very obvious.

Now think of a room lit by several candles. Somehow the better parts of each face are brought out and the flaws are left kindly in the background. Such lights pardon our imperfections and grant us a kind of glow.

Jesus is that kind of light. Not a searchlight from which no flawed, fumbling thing can escape. He came as a simple candle, a forgiver of souls, a quiet lover of human faces.

There is a passage in the First Reading for Sunday that is quoted word for word in Sunday’s Gospel.

“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; upon those who dwelt in the land of gloom a light has shone.”

Here, Jesus is a great light after all. He is relief from the dark that we all walk in. He is divine brilliance.

But the Gospel has him ambling along by the Sea of Galilee like an ordinary person. Strolling. How can this illustrious beam of light be dim, like the rest of us?

Some speculations:
Maybe he is especially vital, the type that people are attracted to. Maybe he is someone you and I would automatically want to follow. After all, on Sunday we will hear about two sets of brothers who drop everything and go after him: Simon Peter and his brother Andrew, and then James and John—the sons of Zebedee, or “sons of thunder,” as Jesus will call them later. None of these men are fools. They would not follow just anyone. Jesus must have been a very appealing person.

So, did they see him as a “great light”? Did they somehow acknowledge that grave darkness would be dispelled by him? They probably had heard from John the Baptist that Jesus was “The Messiah,” the one that the Jews had been awaiting for such a long time.

Yet this Sunday we learn that Jesus’ light did not infringe on every precious cranny of people’s lives, as a searchlight might do. He was like a quiet glow, a candle in the window. His armies did not savage all in their path. His light was not a huge bolt of lightning. It was, impossibly, a quiet flicker that hurricane winds tried and tried to put out, but could not. Seen in this way, Christ’s light was indeed great, but in a new way, in an ordinary, diffused way. One that could suffer on our behalf.

Pope Benedict XVI put it like this:

“God’s sign is simplicity. God’s sign is the baby. God’s sign is that he makes himself small for us. This is how he reigns. He does not come with power and outward splendor. He comes as a baby—defenseless and in need of our help. He does not want to overwhelm us with his strength. He takes away our fear of his greatness. He asks for our love: so he makes himself a child.”

Fr. John Foley, SJ

Fr. John Foley, SJ, is a composer and scholar at Saint Louis University.
This Week in our Parish

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This year the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord, or Candlemas, falls on a Sunday, February 2. Traditionally at Candlemas the faithful bring candles to be blessed. We encourage our Parishioners to bring candles from home, and we will do a communal blessing of the candles at all weekend Masses. We will also have a communal blessing of the throats next weekend, in honor of the Feast of St. Blaise. We will have individual blessing of the throats on Monday, February 3rd, at the 8:00 am Daily Mass.

The flu season has begun early and is widespread in our region of the state. St. Patrick’s Parish is following Bishop Cotta’s recommendations to suspend Communion from the Chalice during this flu season. This is only a temporary measure. We will again distribute Communion from the Chalice as soon as Bishop Cotta informs us it is safe to do so. We pray that all in our community stay healthy this winter!

Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon
Sunday February 9
12:00 pm in the Parish Hall
After the 11:00 am Mass
Please bring a dessert to share.

We thank the many generous and devoted volunteers at St. Patrick’s Parish!
“Volunteers do not have more time, they just have more heart.”

St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church was the first non-Chinese house of worship in Chinese Camp, and is believed to be the second oldest Catholic Church in the Mother Lode; only St. Anne’s in Columbia is older! The Church was built in 1855 and restored in 1949. Father Henry Aleric was the first priest to serve the 70 parishioners at Chinese Camp. He traveled a circuit through the mines, riding a mule and covering an area that stretched from Knights Ferry to Second Garrotte, now a ghost town, which was near Groveland. Can you imagine riding a mule up old Priest Grade? Incidentally, the town of Groveland was originally known as First Garrotte; apparently both towns were famous for multiple hangings! But, as First Garrotte grew and became a more law abiding community, they changed the name to Groveland, and together with Big Oak Flat it is now the home of Our Lady of Mount Carmel. St. Francis Xavier Church, although no longer in use, is located just off Highway 49 in Chinese Camp, CA.

Pray to protect human life!
Join the 9 Days for Life Novena,
January 21-29

9 Days for Life is a novena for the protection of human life. Each day’s intention is accompanied by a short reflection and suggested actions to help build a culture of life. Sign up for daily prayers sent January 21-29 by email or text message, or get notified when the app is updated. Go to www.respectlife.org/9-days-for-life and click on “Sign Up.”
Please Pray for the Sick in our Parish, and their family members.

Jackie Boling  
Aldo Diaz  
Pat Fernandez  
Claudia Day Fossum  
Diane Goodspeed  
Ed Hall  
Eileen Hogan  
A. J. Holmes  
Carol James  
Jeanne Kiely  
Rosemarie Lapan  
Ashlie Lotz  
Lois Marzocchi  
Rosie Napier  
Lee O’Shaughnessy  
Jan Opie  
Gloria & Nuncy Patania  
Juan Pulido  
Cathi Ruiz  
Mary Russell  
Connie Scott  
Clay Sweeney  
Dan Ward

To add or remove a name from this list, please contact the Parish Office at 209-532-7139.

TRAVEL TO INDIA ON VALENTINE’S DAY!
Enjoy special guests Father Banka and friends as they share stories of their recent journey together to India, and their love of the country and its people.

Chicken Dinner and Raffle  
Dinner at 6:00 pm, Raffle to follow  
Tickets $20.00 each

Friday, February 14th, St. Patrick’s Parish Hall

Tickets will be available to purchase after various weekend Masses, in the Parish Office Mon-Thur, or by contacting Cynthia by email: atonewiththespirit@gmail.com

Please purchase your tickets in advance!
All proceeds will go to Spiritual Growth Education.

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Every Christian should be grateful for the gift of his or her baptism, and that gratitude should draw us together to recognize that we are brothers and sisters and called to pursue holiness together, Pope Francis said.

Welcoming an ecumenical pilgrimage from Finland to the Vatican Jan. 17, Pope Francis told the Lutheran, Catholic, Orthodox and other Christian leaders that all Christians are called "to witness to the good news in the midst of their daily life." Hospitality to the stranger and to those in need is a particularly strong form of witness, the pope said on the eve of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, celebrated Jan. 18-25. The theme chosen for this year's commemoration is "They showed us unusual kindness," a quote from St. Paul, writing about the experience of being shipwrecked in Malta.

"As baptized Christians, we believe that Christ wishes to meet us precisely in those who are -- whether literally or figuratively -- shipwrecked in life," Pope Francis told his guests. "Those who show hospitality grow richer, not poorer. Whoever gives, receives in return."

The gratitude Christians feel for the gift of baptism "links and expands our hearts, and opens them to our neighbor, who is not an adversary but our beloved brother, our beloved sister," the pope said.
January 26, 2020

Upcoming Events ~ Save the Date
Sunday 2/9 ~ Volunteer Appreciation Luncheon following the 11:00 am Mass, St. Patrick’s Parish Hall
Friday 2/14 ~ Spiritual Growth Valentine’s Day Dinner and Stories from India 6:00 pm, St. Patrick’s Parish Hall, Tickets $20
Saturday 2/15 ~ Altar Society Luncheon and Bingo Lunch 12:00, Bingo 1:00-3:00 pm St. Patrick’s Parish Hall, Tickets $10
Saturday & Sunday 2/15-16 ~ Bishop’s Ministry Appeal
Tuesday 2/19 ~ Pastoral Council Meeting 6:30 pm, St. Patrick’s Parish Hall Rm. 6
Saturday & Sunday 2/22-23 ~ Bishop’s Ministry Appeal
Wednesday 2/26 ~ Ash Wednesday Season of Lent begins
Monday 3/2 ~ Altar Society Meeting 1:00 pm

READINGS FOR THE WEEK
Monday January 27 ~ Sunday February 2
Monday: 1 Sm 5:1-7, 10; Ps 89:20-22, 25-26; Mk 3:22-30
Tuesday: 2 Sm 6:12b-15, 17-19; Ps 24:7-10; Mk 3:31-35
Wednesday: 2 Sm 7:4-17; Ps 89:4-5, 27-30; Mk 4:1-20
Thursday: 2 Sm 7:18-19, 24-29; Ps 132:1-5, 11-14; Mk 4:21-25
Friday: 2 Sm 11:1-4a, 5-10a, 13-17; Ps 51:3-7, 10-11; Mk 4:26-34
Saturday: 2 Sm 12:1-7a, 10-17; Ps 51:12-17; Mk 4:35-41
Sunday: Mal 3:1-4; Ps 24:7-10; Heb 2:14-18; Lk 2:22-40 (22-32)

SAINTS AND SPECIAL OBSERVANCES
Sunday January 26 ~ Saturday February 1
Sunday: Third Sunday in Ordinary Time; Sunday of the Word of God; Catholic Schools Week
Monday: St. Angela Merici
Tuesday: St. Thomas Aquinas
Friday: St. John Bosco
Saturday: Blessed Virgin Mary; First Saturday

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