



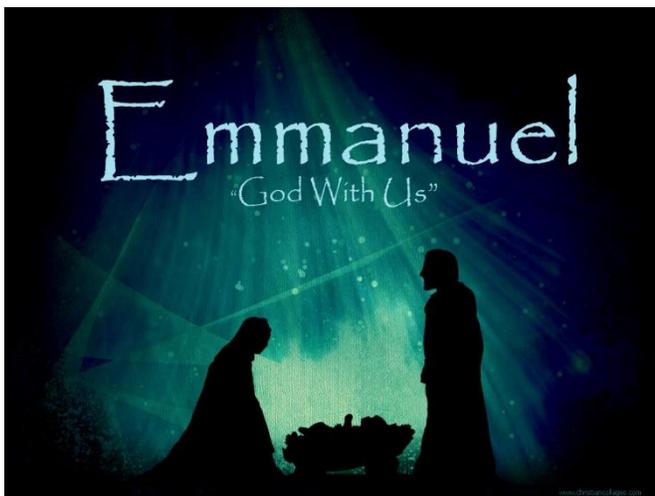
ALL SAINTS' CHURCH

"Our mission is to bring the good news of Jesus Christ's love to our entire community through traditional Anglo-Catholic worship, fellowship, outreach, and Christian formation."

Our Vision: *"We strive to be a haven of healing, reconciliation, joy and peace in service to our wider community and beyond, so that our example in prayer and practice may reflect Christ's love for us all."*

THIS SUNDAY —December 25 & Beyond

The Grace of God for All



Christmas is coming, and although the media and the decorations and articles for sale in all stores try to push us to believe that it has been Christmas right after Thanksgiving Day, the fact is that the Christmas season consists of twelve days, from December 25 to January 5.

There is nothing wrong, many would argue, with entering the Christmas spirit beforehand, especially when the world has gone through so much suffering during the last two years, and it seems that this year we are able to celebrate without so many restrictions at last!

Granted. There is nothing wrong with a certain anticipation of the Christmas celebrations. After all it has always been the case to prepare for Christmas by decorating, by putting up a Christmas tree, by preparing for the main celebrations. And Advent is the season that puts us into the mood of entering into the joy of Christmas by preparing ourselves properly.

It is well known by all that Christmas is essentially a Christian celebration, and some people even enjoy the beauty of the Christmas carols and songs, that tell the story of Jesus' birth and our salvation through Him, even when they are not even religious people.

But unfortunately for many Christmas has become just one season of partying and exchanging presents, of showing off with the most expensive decoration in the neighborhood, of dazzling our relatives and friends with the finest of all celebrations, and sometimes attending the local church, especially when our children or grandchildren are performing, to show them our support.

It is urgent that we Christians rescue the true Christmas for all!

While I was still in Cuba, and for several decades the government decided that the Christmas celebrations had no place at all in an atheist country, I remember one Episcopal priest once say from the pulpit that he was glad it was so, because then those who celebrated Christmas really celebrated it with its true sense, even if there were no presents to exchange, or no Christmas trees to buy.

I was not so sure that this priest was right at that moment. I really regretted that Christmas Day was not even a holiday in the calendar in Cuba, and unless it fell on a Sunday we had to go to work during the day and have our celebration at church in the evening.

Nowadays I see a lot of truth in what this priest said then. Of course I am not in favor of abolishing the Christmas celebrations from our calendars, but I do think that going back to the true sense of Christmas is a must.

So what is the real sense of the Christmas celebration?

It may seem obvious. Anyone—even someone who is not Christian—will readily tell you that we celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, and they will probably add, “although we know that Jesus was not really born on December 25.”

But there is a much deeper sense in the Christmas story. It is a story about incarnation, about God with us, God made man by the power of the Holy Spirit through a virgin. God that came down to us to in human form to show us what His love is like, by His infinite grace, and not by any merits of ours.

By becoming perfectly human, in the humblest of ways, God has revealed to us how infinitely great His saving grace is. In Jesus Christ God revealed Himself as the One who loves us unconditionally, and gives Himself for us in sacrifice, so that we may live abundant, everlasting, and real lives in His love.

In his letter to Titus, the Apostle Paul expresses this truth eloquently in these words, “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all, training us to renounce impiety and worldly passions and in the present age to live lives that are self-controlled, upright, and godly, while we wait for the blessed hope and the manifestation of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.”

So this is the true message of Christmas, the one we need to rescue for all. It is the most joyful of messages because God has made Himself known to us, and has come to live with us that our lives may be transformed back into the image and likeness of what we have always been meant to be—the resemblance of our loving God—and be partakers of the wonderful glory of His son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

The Rev. Carlos Expósito

Readings for Christmas Day

Isaiah 52:7-10 Hebrews 1:1-12 Psalm 98:1-6 John 1:1-14

CALENDAR

Note: We continue worshipping in our historic church. The service will also be on Zoom. The service time is 10am. Tuesday Noon Mass and Friday Morning Prayer are held in All Saints’ St. Mary Chapel.

SUNDAY Christmas Day

10:00am Mass in All Saints’ Church

Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at www.allsaintschurch.org

Recording of Mass available before noon at www.allsaintschurch.org

Christian Formation and First Communion Instruction for Children

Ages 5-12 in the Parish Hall from 10:00am-10:45am

Christian Formation Meets at Noon in January on the 8th and 29th

Topic: Communicating with God--Meets in the Rector’s Study

TUESDAY Noon Mass in St. Mary Chapel

THURSDAY Spanish Class 1:00pm to 3:00pm in the Flower Room. Taught by Fr. Carlos **Note: In recess during December.**

FRIDAY 10:00am Morning Prayer in St. Mary Chapel

SUNDAY First Sunday after Christmas

10:00am Mass in All Saints' Church

Join Zoom Meeting from our web site at www.allsaintschurch.org

Recording of Mass available before noon at www.allsaintschurch.org

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OUR CORE VALUES:

- Welcoming strangers like old friends
- Embracing the Anglo-Catholic tradition
- Being dependable members of a caring community
- Respecting each other's differences
- Being faithful stewards of God's gift
- Remembering that God loves everyone unconditionally

An Anglo-Catholic Parish in the Episcopal Diocese of San Diego
www.allsaintschurch.org