

Saint Mary Roman Catholic Church

1000 North Jefferson Avenue, Goldsboro NC 27530-3141

919-734-5033

Rev. Alex Gonzalez, Pastor

Deacon Webster James

December 13, 2015—Third Sunday of Advent



EUCCHARISTIC LITURGY

Weekend

Saturday Vigil

5:00PM English

7:00PM Spanish

Fin de Semana

Sábado ~ 5:00 PM En Inglés

Sábado ~ 7:00 PM En Español

Sunday

10:00 AM English

1:00 PM Spanish

Domingo ~ 10:00 AM En Inglés

Domingo ~ 1:00 PM En Español

Weekdays

9:00 AM Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday
lunes, martes, miércoles, viernes

7:00 PM Jueves en Español

No 9 AM Mass on Thursday

No hay Misa los jueves a las 9 AM

Días de Semana

Holy Days check inside Bulletin

Revise dentro del Boletín que se entrega en las Misas

First Friday Adoration begins after morning Mass
and ends with Benediction at 9:30 PM.

Todos los viernes primero de mes de 10:00 AM Adoración
al Santísimo a 9:30 PM.

WELCOME VISITORS AND NEWCOMERS

New members may register by calling the parish
office (weekdays from 8:30 AM to 4:00 PM).

BIENVENIDOS LOS NUEVOS MIEMBROS

Para registrarse hablar con Elvira Ponce
o llamar a la oficina

Mission Statement

Saint Mary is a diverse Catholic community working
together to live the Gospel, grow in faith through the
Eucharist, and share our gifts in service to others.

Misión de la Parroquia

La parroquia de Santa María es una comunidad
católica y diversa que trabaja unida para vivir el
evangelio, crecer en fe por la Eucaristía y compartir
nuestros talentos en servicio a otros.

**PARISH DIRECTORY
CHURCH**

Office (Oficina): 919 734-5033
FAX: 919 580-0730
E-Mail:
office@saintmarygoldsboro.org
web: www.saintmarygoldsboro.org

PARISH STAFF

Rev. Alex Gonzalez, Pastor.....ext. 27
Deacon Webster A. James.....ext. 29
Director of Faith Formation
Mrs. Carole Sears.....ext. 34
Liturgy Coordinator
Mrs. Debbie Gambella,
Parish Secretary.....ext. 10
Mrs. Kathy Hennessy,
Parish Secretary.....ext. 26
Mrs. Tracey Davis,
Parish Bookkeeper.....ext. 28
Mrs. Vicki Ellis,
Choir Director, 10:00 AM
Mr. Philip Eubanks, Organist
Mr. Mike Nault, Organist & Choir
Director, 5:00 PM
Mr. Van Tran, Sacristan

SCHOOL

Office: 919 735-1931
FAX: 919 735-1917
E-Mail:
lynnmagoon@smgoldsboro.org
annemariiegambella@smgoldsboro.org

SCHOOL STAFF

Mrs. Lynn Magoon,
Principal.....ext. 22
Mrs. Anne Marie Gambella,
Admn. Assistant.....ext. 11

MAINTENANCE STAFF

Mr. Harold Jones,
Supervisor.....ext. 31
Mr. Larry Jones,
Assistant.....ext. 31

**PASTORAL ADVISORY
COUNCIL**

Chair Harold Breindel, Vice-Chair Gene Seward, Secretary Sharon Thomas
Finance Council Chair John Heeden,
John Beatty, Pat Emery, Lonnie Fissori, Anne Hurrey, Paula Long, Carlos Morales-Barrientos, Phyllis Radford, Donna Stevenson.

The Parish Advisory Council meets August through May. Our next meeting will be December 1, 2015 at 6:00 p.m. in the Faith Formation Conf. Room. All parishioners are invited to attend.

Penance and Reconciliation
Saturday ~ 4-4:40PM and by appointment.

**Mass Intentions and Readings
for December 12 to December 20**

Sat.12/12	Zechariah 2:14-17 or Revelation 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab; Judith 13:18bcde, 19; Luke 1:26-38 or Luke 1:39-47
5:00PM	Catherine Gambella, dec. by Russ & Maureen Prys
7:00PM	Pro Populo
Sun.12/13	Zephaniah 3:14-18a; Isaiah 12:2-3, 4, 5-6; Philippians 4:4-7; Luke 3:10-18
10:00AM	Father Gerald McMahan, dec. by Yurksaitis Family
1:00PM	For a Special Intention by Brian Casey
Mon.12/14	Numbers 24:2-7, 15-17a; Psalms 25:4-5ab, 6, 7bc-9; Matthew 21:23-27
9:00AM	Gioankim Hoe & Anna Bot, dec. by Gia Nguyen
Tue.12/15	Zephaniah 3:1-2, 9-13; Psalms 34:2-3, 6-7, 17-19, 23; Matthew 21:28-32
9:00AM	William Kuczynski, dec. by Kuczynski Family
Wed.12/16	Isaiah 45:6b-8, 18, 21b-25; Psalms 85:9-14; Luke 7:18b-23
9:00AM	Richard Strong, dec. by George & Marianne West
Thu.12/17	Genesis 49:2, 8-10; Psalms 72:1-4ab, 7-8, 17; Matthew 1:1-17
7:00PM	No Spanish Mass Tonight
Fri.12/18	Jeremiah 23:5-8; Psalms 72:1-2, 12-13, 18-19; Matthew 1:18-25
9:00AM	In honor of Carrie Talton by Lovick Family
Sat.12/19	Judges 13:2-7, 24-25a; Psalms 71:3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17; Luke 1:5-25
5:00PM	Tempie Farfour, dec. by Farfour Family
7:00PM	Pro Populo
Sun.12/20	Micah 5:1-4a; Psalms 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19; Hebrews 10:5-10; Luke 1:39-45
10:00AM	Joseph Kordish, dec. by Bobby & Marcie Grant
1:00PM	General Chris Anzalone, dec. by Brian & Karen Casey

Sacramental Life

Baptism
Baptisms are during Mass the third week-end of each month. Preparation is required before *scheduling* the time and date.

Marriage
Contact the Deacon *six months in advance* of the ceremony.

Sacrament of the Sick
If you wish to receive the sacrament of the sick during a prolonged illness or before surgery, please call the office.

Communion
If you wish to receive communion from a Eucharistic Minister due to illness, age, or handicap, please call the office. These visits are made after the Mass has been celebrated.

Altar Flowers
are in Loving Memory of **Joseph Bannon** by his wife Mary and daughters.

The Sanctuary Lamps for the week of December 13 to 19

Church Lamp: will be lit in Honor of **Sam Vermuelin on the occasion of his 50th Birthday** by Bobbie & Marcie Grant.

Chapel Lamp: will be lit in Loving Memory of **Father Ruhl** and in Honor of **Father Tom Norris** by Olga Markowitsch.

Advent Holy Hours for Vocations...

Our Church is in need of vocations to the Priesthood and Religious life...prayer is one way for us to do something to help...If you missed the first Holy Hour join us on one of the following Monday's in Advent to spend an hour with Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament and pray for Vocations: December 14 and 21. Holy Hours are from 6 to 7PM in the Chapel.

TYM Bake Sale...

On the weekend of December 19th and 20th our TYM members will be hosting a Bake Sale after the Masses...stop by and purchase some of the delicious baked goods. All proceeds will go toward their summer mission trip.

SVDP Needs the Following...

Our SVDP Society is in need of the following items for their food pantry: Spaghetti, jelly, soup of any kind but especially tomato and chicken soup, canned chicken, tuna, peas, corn and potted meats like Spam and treat, canned tuna and salmon. They could also use cans of ravioli, chili, spagettios and rice in 1 or 2lb bags. Thank you, in advance, for your generosity.

Thank You...

Our SVDP Society wants to thank all who were so generous with their donations on Thanksgiving Day. The non-perishable foods received during the Mass that day have helped with their stocking of the food pantry. Thank you for your generous hearts and may God Bless each one of you.

Offertory Report

November 29: \$7,453.05
 \$7,750.00
 (\$ 296.95)

Thanksgiving: \$984.00

Second Collection December 20:
 SVDP Society

Parish Calendar

Sunday, December 13 –Third Sunday of Advent		
* SVDP Breakfast	Cafeteria	9:00am to noon
* Faith Formation MS & HS	Classrooms	11:15am to 12:45pm
* Faith Formation K to 5th grade	Classrooms	11:30am to 12:30pm
* RCIA	Lounge	After 10:00am mass
* Spanish Language Choir	Church	After 1:00pm Mass
Monday, December 14		
* Advent Holy Hour for Vocations	Chapel	6:00pm to 7:00pm
* Hispanic Marriage Prep.	8th grade classroom	6:30pm
Tuesday, December 15		
* SMS Christmas Musical	Auditorium	6:30pm
* Perpetual Novena	Chapel	6:45pm
* Legion of Mary	Library	7:00pm
Wednesday, December 16		
* 27:17 Fellowship (Men's Group)	5 Star Restaurant	7:00am
Thursday, December 17		
* "Highnooners" Book Club	Office	noon
* Children's Choir Practice	Church	5:30pm
* 10:00am Choir Practice	Church	7:00pm
* No Spanish Mass this evening		
Friday, December 18		
* School Liturgy	Church	9:00am
* SMS Noon Dismissal		
* Spanish Choir Practice	Church	6:00pm
Saturday, December 19		
* 5:00pm Choir Practice	Church	4:00pm
Sunday, December 20-Fourth Sunday of Advent		
* RCIA	Lounge	After 10:00am Mass
* NO Faith Formation Classes		
* Spanish Language Choir Practice	Church	After 1:00pm Mass

Congratulations...

To Jim and Billie Myers the winners of the Sunday Morning Parking Spot. As of January 1, 2016 only Jim & Billie Myers may park in the first spot outside the church for the 10:00am Mass. Congratulations Jim and Billie!

This parking space is still available for the Saturday 5PM and 7PM Mass or the Sunday, 1PM Mass. If you would like to bid on this parking space for one of those Masses please, call the Parish Office at 919-734-5033 ext. 10 or 26 with you bid.



Congratulations to **Jack Lee Rogers**, son of Glenn & Jeana Rogers who was Baptized here on November 28, 2015.



In our thoughts and prayers:

Pray for the intentions of those in nursing facilities, the homebound, the chronically ill, and those who are critically ill.

Please remember in a special way the following parishioners who have requested your prayers:

Santiago Acevedo, Robert Ames, Dolores & Gary Barton, Jesse Brickhouse, Nadia Cano, Marco Castaneda, Judy Cordeiro, Andrea Cruz, Maria del Socorro Cruz, Lee & Sarah Davis, Marjorie Dixon, Elaine Evans, John-Alex Gonzalez, Jr., Gustavo Gonzalez, Chris Griffin, Agnes Harris, Mary Hayman, Rogisides Jaimenes, Joan Jones, Laura Jones, Dianne Kendall, Bertha Kish, Chuck Kirk, Erma Lawrence, Denise Lewis, Dorothy Lewis, Pat Marguglio, T.J. Mendoza, Billie Myers, Jim Myers, Wilburt & Mary Perry, Ray Prazak, Benjamin Raposa, Ben Rodriguez, Sr., Dolores Santi, Angela Scalia, Natalie Ulrey, Azeneth Viafara.

If you would like your name included in the Prayers for the Sick in the Bulletin please contact our coordinators for "Prayers for the Sick", Gloria at 919-734-3810 or Barbara at 919-751-0024.

Baby Bottle Drive...

Don't forget our Baby Bottle Drive is still going on...if you took a baby bottle please continue to fill it with money and remember to return it to the Church office by December 23rd.

March for Life...

The annual March for Life in Washington, DC will take place on Friday, January 22, 2016. We will have a bus, again, this year. If you would like to reserve a seat or sponsor a seat the cost is \$40.00. Just contact John Marguglio at 919-988-2389.

TREASURES FROM OUR TRADITION

This week, our celebration of Advent makes a transition in ritual and texts. Beginning December 18, the countdown of nine days (a novena) to Christmas sees a heightened sense of expectation, and also a turning from the call of the Baptist in the wilderness to the events leading up to Jesus' birth. In ancient Spain, December 18 was once celebrated as the "Feast of the Expectancy," and customs grew up to heighten readiness in the homes.

Some customs arise from monastic life and practice and spill over into our parish life. Beginning tonight, those who pray Vespers will sing in the opening phrase a beautiful title of Christ. These titles belong to a collection of opening phrases called the "O Antiphons" after the awe-inspired "O" sung on the first note. There's a playful code in the titles: O Wisdom, O Lord, O Flower of Jesse, O Key of David, O Dawn, O Ruler, O Emmanuel. When you take their Latin names --Sapientia, Adonai, Radix, and so on --the titles form an acrostic when you read them backwards: "ERO CRAS." In Latin, that is translated as "I will be there tomorrow!" It's as if Christ were answering the prayers of the waiting people in the words of the prayers themselves.

--Rev. James Field, Copyright (c) J. S. Paluch Co.

Scrip...

Our last Scrip day before Christmas will be Monday, December 14th. If you want to place an order it must be in the Parish Office on Monday, December 14th by 8:15am.

Some scrip cards you can purchase for \$10.00 are:

Albertsons, Amazon.com, AMC Theaters, Applebee's, Barned & Noble, CVS/Pharmacy, Groupon, IHOP, Meijer, Outback, Panera Bread, Regal Entertainment Group, Starbucks, Target, Supervalu, Walmart.

So get the last of your Christmas shopping done and help us with our Family Life Center Building Fund.

Diocese of Raleigh

www.dioceseofraleigh.org

Sixth Annual Love My Life Youth Rally

On Saturday, January 16 at 10:00 the Sixth Annual Love My Life Youth Rally will be held at Halifax Mall in downtown Raleigh. The Rally is an opportunity for Catholic teens to come together in celebration, to connect with others from across the Diocese, and to learn more about living and promoting the pro-life culture. Contact your school or youth leaders for more information on this awesome, spirit filled event. The Diocesan Respect Life mass will immediately follow at noon. All of these events will be held in a heated tent!

Project Rachel Support

Group Abortion is one of the most common procedures in the US, experienced by millions of women, many of whom are Catholic. Abortion creates a wound in post-abortive women, (and men) resulting in spiritual and emotional problems. The Project Rachel ministry assists women and men who have been wounded by abortion to find truth and healing. There is a support group beginning in the Triangle area in January. If you have experienced an abortion and would like more information about the support group, contact Project Rachel at (919) 852-1021 or email projectrachel@nc.rr.com. For more information go to <http://projectrachelnc.org/> (website) Calls and appointments are kept strictly confidential.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter...

The next weekends are Feb. 5-7, 2016 in Asheville, NC and Apr.29-May1 in Chapel Hill, NC. Early sign up is highly recommended. For more information visit our website at:<http://NCMarriageDiscovery.org> or contact us at applications@NCMarriageDiscovery.org or 704-315-2144.



Saint Mary School Corner

Keeping Spirit and Faith in Education

The Christmas Store

at Saint Mary School will be opened on Monday, December 14th and will stay open that week or until the merchandise is gone. Hours of operation are 9:00am to 3:00pm. This store is operated so our children can purchase gifts for their parents, grandparents and siblings. Thank you to our wonderful volunteers who take care of the set up, work the week of the store opening helping the children with their purchases, wrap gifts and then clean it all up! You are wonderful and we truly appreciate all you do for our children.

The Week at Saint Mary School:

- Tuesday, December 15th we have our Christmas Musical performed by our Pre-K though 2nd grade students. The Musical will take place in the School Auditorium starting at 6:30pm.
- Thursday, December 17th the 7th grade has the Bake Sale.
- Friday, December 18th our school will have a noon dismissal.
- Christmas Holiday will be from noon December 18th with the school opening up on Monday, January 4th.

TYM ...What are They Doing?

Our TYM program is a busy one, over the next few months the teens will be participating in the *Love My Life Rally* held in Raleigh on January 16th. Some of the teens will attend the DC March for Life on January 22nd. On February 7th the teens will do the "Souper Bowl" collection after all Masses with all donations going to the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

Respect Life



Abortion and Christmas

Over the last few years, in certain parts of the country, one can give friends and loved ones Planned Parenthood gift certificates. These vouchers can be used towards abortion, various contraceptive devices, or any of Planned Parenthood's other "family planning" services (a total misnomer, since the goal of family planning is most definitely *not* end up with a family). The fact that Planned Parenthood is offering contraception and abortion as a possible *gift* makes their philosophy about abortion very clear. This is certainly not the action of a group of people who want abortion to be "safe, legal, and rare," as their popular phrase goes.

They want the death of the unborn child to be seen as a *positive* thing, not a regrettable but sometimes "necessary procedure" as they claim. Of course, this is not surprising, since Planned Parenthood makes its profits from abortions; they are just another company trying to aggressively promote their main product.

This view of life could not be more opposed to the biblical view. In the biblical world, children are unequivocally seen as wonderful gifts from God:

"Like arrows in the hand of a warrior are the children of one's youth. Blessed is the man who fills his quiver with them! He shall not be put to shame ... " Psalm 127: 4-5

At Christmas time, we celebrate the greatest gift of life to mankind in the birth of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. To associate abortion in any way with the Christmas celebration is absolutely antithetical to the entire meaning of Christmas and to our Christian faith.

~Pro-Life Articles for Bulletins

Third Sunday of Advent Not Ready? No Problem!

While Advent is a beautiful time to prepare for the coming of the Lord, we often get so caught up in all the things we do to prepare for Christmas that we forget Advent all together. The readings remind us that in spite of the stress we may feel thinking about how close Christmas is, we are called to rejoice for the Lord is near. The stress we feel may be from fear: Fear that I won't get the shopping done by Christmas, fear that people won't like the gifts I bought, or fear that I forgot someone that should be on my list. But did you ever notice how much easier it is when you have someone to shop with you, or write the Christmas cards, or decorate the tree? "Shout for joy. . .fear not!" says the prophet Zephaniah in the first reading. (Zeph 3:14) He tells us the Lord is not coming to punish us for waiting till the last minute to put up the tree. The prophet says the Lord is in our midst, we are not alone. "He has turned away your enemies" (Zeph 3:15), enemies like fear, doubts, and loneliness.

And as if that wasn't good enough, he says that the Lord rejoices over us! How many times have you wondered if you could ask the Lord for help? Zephaniah reminds us that the Lord is happy to help. And St. Paul says the same thing in the second reading: "Have no anxiety at all. . .make your requests known to God." (Phil 4:6) That is where Advent comes in. We can look forward to the Lord's presence in our lives. We can be confident of his love for us. That is why faith and hope are central to the theme of Advent. Our faith in God's love for us gives us hope that he will support us in our weakness and fill us with the joy he has over us.

Tom Schmidt, Copyright (c) J. S. Paluch Co.

STRENGTH AND COURAGE

Prayer infuses the weak with strength and the fainthearted with courage.

--Anonymous

St. Mary Catholic Church Mobile App



3 ways to get the app

1. Scan the QR code
2. Search in the app store
3. Go to www.parishsolutionsco.com/marygold



THE
PARISH
SOLUTIONS COMPANY

INFORMATION ON THE JUBILEE YEAR OF MERCY...WHAT IT MEANS, WHAT IT IS, HOW WE CAN PARTICIPATE...

EXTRAORDINARY JUBILEE OF MERCY

DEC. 8, 2015 - NOV. 20, 2016



"IT WILL BE A HOLY YEAR OF MERCY."
-POPE FRANCIS

HAT IS THE YEAR OF MERCY?

Seeing the great need for mercy and healing in the world, **Pope Francis** called for the Year of Mercy—a special period, also known as a Holy Year or Jubilee Year, for the Catholic Church. It is a time for the Church across the world to take approximately a year to focus on forgiveness and healing in a special way.

Pope Francis has asked us as individuals and as a Church “to be a witness of mercy” by reflecting on and practicing the spiritual and corporal works of mercy ([Pope Francis’ Announcement of the Year of Mercy](#)). Beginning December 8, 2015, the Holy Year of Mercy will focus on studying and reflecting on mercy, receiving mercy, and being merciful towards others.

To read more, visit the [Vatican’s official website for the Year of Mercy](#).

WHAT IS A JUBILEE YEAR?

A Jubilee Year is when the Catholic Church across the world takes approximately a year to focus on forgiveness and healing in a special way. Catholics are encouraged to join together in prayer, go to confession, and share the genius of Catholicism with others.

The purpose of a Jubilee Year is to help people grow spiritually, strengthen their faith, and encourage works of service, and to promote unity within the Catholic Church and society in general.

The last Jubilee Year was in 2000, called for by Pope Saint John Paul II.

WHAT IS THE INDULGENCE FOR THE YEAR OF MERCY?

Like any Jubilee Year, a person can receive a plenary indulgence for the Year of Mercy. A plenary indulgence removes all of what is called “temporal punishment” due to sins that have already been forgiven. Sin and evil are real. Every sin, large or small, is in some way a rejection of the-best-version-of-ourselves and a rejection of God. “Temporal punishment” is the natural consequence of that sin, the necessary purification following forgiveness of sin.

(See Catechism of the Catholic Church on [Indulgences](#) and [Sin and Mercy](#)).

HOW TO PRACTICE MERCY.

Practice the Corporal and Spiritual works of Mercy, pray and read and meditate on the scriptures.

Corporal Works of Mercy: Feed the hungry, Give drink to the thirsty, Clothe the naked, Shelter the homeless, Visit those in prison, Comfort the sick, Bury the dead.

Spiritual Works of Mercy: Admonish sinners, Instruct the uninformed, Counsel the doubtful, Comfort the sorrowful, Be patient with those in error, Forgive offenses, Pray for the living and the dead.

Directorio

Padre John Alexander Gonzalez
919 734-5033 ext. 27

Bautismos—Elvira Ponce 919-252-0768

Sacramentos

Bautismo: Asistir a la preparación, padres y padrinos y fijar la fecha con el sacerdote.

Confesión: Sábados de 4:00pm a 4:40pm

Para enfermos en el hospital o en casa comuníquese con la parroquia.

Unción de los Enfermos: Si usted quiere recibir el sacramento por enfermedad u operación favor de comunicárnoslo.

Comunión para enfermos: Si tiene algún familiar en el hospital o en casa que desee recibir la comunión comuníquese con la parroquia.

Matrimonios: Iniciar la preparación con seis meses de anticipación.

Platicas Pre-Bautismales

Requisitos:

- * Asistir a las pláticas, padres y padrinos.
- * Traer copia del acta de nacimiento del niño (a).
- * Traer copia del acta de matrimonio de los padrinos.
- * Llenar una solicitud por niño.
- * Estar registrados o registrarse en la parroquia.

Confirmaciones

- * Estar bautizado.
- * Haber hecho la primera comunión.
- * Ser mayor de 15 años.

Presentaciones

Requisitos:

- * Solicitarla 2 meses antes.
- * Estar bautizado (a).
- * Donación
- * Se hacen en la Misa del sábado o Domingo

XV Años

Si cumplés y/o deseas celebrar tus XV años en los primeros 6 meses del año te invitamos a inscribirte para la preparación:

Requisitos:

- * Estar bautizada

- * Haber hecho la primera Comunión
- * Inscribirse con 4 meses de anticipación con María la coordinadora.
- * Asistir a la preparación
- * Donación
- * Llevarse un volante de información y seguir las reglas.

TRADICIONES DE NUESTRA FE

Los cristianos latinos tenemos unos cinco siglos en nuestra trayectoria de fe y como todo cristiano aguardamos la segunda venida del Mesías, Jesús. Nuestra espera forma parte de dos milenios de cristianos que buscan verlo llegar en las nubes.

Desde el siglo VII la oración oficial de la Iglesia clama el retorno de Cristo con las exclamaciones llamadas las "Antífonas Oh". Estas llaman a Jesús pidiéndole que venga bajo los títulos de Emmanuel, Sabiduría celestial, Señor de gran poder, Vara de Isaí, Llave de David, Alba de la luz, y Deseo y Rey de gentes, y algunos más. Estos refranes se usan aún todavía hoy durante los días 17 al 23 de diciembre, y unidas en un acróstico latino forman las palabras *ero cras* (estaré mañana), como respuesta a la petición cristiana. Eventualmente en el siglo X o XI estas antífonas fueron unidas en el canto gregoriano *Veni, veni Emmanuel* (Oh ven, oh ven Emmanuel).

Este Adviento mientras cantamos las antiguas antífonas hay que preguntarnos si de veras estamos listos para el regreso del Hijo del Hombre que viene para juzgar a vivos y muertos. --Fray Gilberto Cavazos-Glz, OFM, (c) Copyright, J. S. Paluch Co.

CELEBRA

Este domingo, Dios canta y se regocija por nosotros. Leemos hoy en Sofonías que Dios "se llenará de júbilo por tu causa, como en los días de fiesta" (Sofonías 3:18). Sabemos mucho de cantar en festivales. Ya nuestros oídos resuenan con los cantos y villancicos que anticipan la época navideña.

Pablo nos recuerda la fuente de este doble regocijo: Dios, tu poderoso salvador, está en medio de ti (en palabras de Sofonías). Por ser así, nos

dice Pablo, podemos alegrarnos y estar en paz. No tenemos que inquietarnos, porque la paz de Dios custodiará nuestros corazones y pensamientos.

Un villancico antiguo representa la Navidad como "el día de mi baile" y nos urge a tomar parte en el baile. ¿Por qué todo el regocijo? Porque "el Señor está cerca" nos recuerda Pablo (Filipenses 4:5). Entonces apunta a la otra razón para el baile: el amanecer de la promesa de paz, la paz que sobrepasa toda inteligencia, y que ya está al alcance de la mano.

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UNA LUZ

El Bautista necesitaba aclarar otros puntos -que él no era el Mesías; que él no era Él que venía; que él no era la salvación del pueblo. Con la llegada de las fiestas, tal vez todos tenemos necesidad de tener cuidado de seguir a alguien equivocado. Por supuesto sabemos que Jesús es nuestra Luz, pero hay muchas otras luces que pueden irrumpir en nuestro camino en este época. Tenemos el resplandor de esta época, sin mencionar las compras, las envolturas de regalos, las comidas especiales, y todas esas fiestas de la temporada. Nada de esto es malo, pero si se lo permitimos, pueden hacernos perder nuestro enfoque en el Señor. Es como conducir un auto en la noche -cuando las luces interiores están encendidas, es más difícil ver hacia dónde vamos.

Pero no hay por qué perder nuestro camino -ni ahora, ni nunca. Con tales guías como Sofonías, Pablo y Juan Bautista que nos mantengan enfocados hacia nuestro verdadero norte. La buena nueva de Juan para el pueblo es nuestra buena nueva ahora -dos mil años más tarde. Faltan sólo ocho días para la Navidad. Celebremos y bailemos al son de la música.

Lecturas de hoy: Sof 3:14-18a; Is 12:2-6; Fil 4:4-7; Lc 3:10-18

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Lecturas De La Semana

- Lunes:** Números 24:2-7, 15-17a; Salmos 25 (24):4-5ab, 6, 7bc-9; Mateo 21:23-27
- Martes:** Sofonías 3:1-2, 9-13; Salmos 34 (33):2-3, 6-7, 17-19, 23; Mateo 21:28-32
- Miércoles:** Isaías 45:6b-8, 18, 21b-25; Salmos 85 (84):9-14; Lucas 7:18b-23
- Jueves:** Génesis 49:2, 8-10; Salmos 72 (71):1-4ab, 7-8, 17; Mateo 1:1-17
- Viernes:** Jeremías 23:5-8; Salmos 72 (71):1-2, 12-13, 18-19; Mateo 1:18-25
- Sábado:** Jueces 13:2-7, 24-25a; Salmos 71 (70):3-4a, 5-6ab, 16-17; Lucas 1:5-25
- Domingo:** Miqueas 5:1-4a; Salmos 80 (79):2-3, 15-16, 18-19; Hebreos 10:5-10; Lucas 1:39-45

Aborto y Navidad

En los últimos años, en ciertas partes del país, uno puede dar a sus amigos y familiares, certificados de regalos de Planned Parenthood. Estos certificados pueden usarse para aborto, varios artículos anticonceptivos, o cualquiera de los otros servicios de “planificación familiar” que ofrece Planned Parenthood (totalmente inadecuado, ya que la meta de la planificación familiar es definitivamente la de *no* terminar con la familia).. El hecho de que Planned Parenthood este ofreciendo anticonceptivos y aborto como posible *regalo*, hace muy clara su filosofía acerca del aborto. Esto ciertamente no es una acción de un grupo de personas que desean que el aborto sea “seguro, legal y raro,” como es la frase popular que usan. Ellos quieren que la muerte del niño no nacido se vea como algo *positivo*,

no como algo deplorable, algunas veces como un “procedimiento necesario” como ellos así lo llaman. Por supuesto, esto no es una sorpresa, ya que Planned Parenthood hace su ganancia de los abortos; ellos solamente son como cualquier otra gran compañía que trata agresivamente promover su mejor producto. Este modo de ver la vida no puede ser más opuesto a la visión bíblica. En el mundo bíblico los niños son, sin equivocarse, vistos como un maravilloso regalo de Dios. “Como flechas en manos del guerrero son los hijos de la juventud. Feliz el hombre que con tales flechas ha llenado su alijaba! Sus contrarios no los harán callar.... Salmo 127:4-5 En el tiempo de Navidad, nosotros celebramos el más grande de los regalos de vida a la humanidad con el nacimiento del Mesías, Jesucristo. El asociar de alguna manera el aborto con la Navidad, es absolutamente opuesto al verdadero significado de la Navidad y a nuestra fe Cristiana.