

Christ Child Catholic Church
*Dedicated to Growth in Christ and to the
Challenges of Loving Service*

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Fourth Sunday of Lent
March 31, 2019

The Fourth Sunday of Lent is traditionally known as “Laetare” Sunday, so-called from the first word of the antiphon at the Introit. “Laetare Rejoice,” sets a tone of joyful anticipation of the Easter mystery...!

WITH ARMS WIDE-OPEN

For many people, God is anything but the one who is able to give them joy. To think of God brings up bad memories: from deep within comes the idea of someone threatening or demanding, who turns their life into something boring, uncomfortable and dangerous.

Little by little they have left God out of their lives. Faith has become “repressed” within. At this point they don’t know if they believe or not. They are left without any pathway to God. Some may still recall “the parable of the prodigal son”, but they haven’t ever listened to it in their heart.

The true protagonist of this parable is the FATHER. Twice he repeats the same cry of joy: “This son of mine was dead and has come back to life; he was lost and is found”. This cry reveals what’s in the father’s heart.

This father isn’t worried about honor, his own interests, nor in the way have his sons treated him. He never uses the language of morality. He only thinks about his son’s life: his son isn’t destroyed, isn’t left dead, and doesn’t end up lost without knowing the joy of life. This story describes to the smallest detail the surprising meeting of the father with his son who had abandoned his home. Even when the son was far off, the father “spotted him” coming hungry and humiliated, and “he was moved” down in his very bowels. This keen sight, full of kindness and compassion, is what saves us. Only God sees us so. Right away “he rushes over”. It’s not the son who comes home. It’s the father who goes out running and who reaches out more passionately than his very son. “He grabbed him by the neck and kept kissing him”. God’s always like that: running with open arms toward those who come back.

The son starts his confession: he’s been working on it for a long time in his mind. The father interrupts him to save him more humiliation. He doesn’t impose any punishment, demands no ritual of expiation; he places no condition on welcoming him home. Only God welcomes and protects sinners thus.

The father only thinks about his son’s dignity. He needs to act quickly. He orders them to bring him the best clothes, a son’s ring, and sandals to walk home. There he will be received at a banquet celebrated in his honor. The son has to know, sitting next to his father, the dignity and happiness of the life that he wasn’t able to enjoy while separated from his father.

Whoever hears this parable from the outside won’t understand anything. That person will continue walking through life without God. Whoever hears it from the heart, might weep

with joy and gratitude. That one will feel, maybe for the first time that in the final mystery of life there is Someone who welcomes us and forgives us, because that Someone only wants us to be filled with joy.
José Antonio Pagola – Translator: Fr. Jay VonHandorf

For Pregnancy Support
Birthright 241-8444 or 800-550-4900
Prayer Group in the Parish
Every Tuesday at 8:15 am. All women
And All Men!

MASS INTENTIONS March 30 – April 5
Saturday 5:00 p.m. + Deceased Duncan Family
Sunday 10:00 a.m. + Clark Brown Arnardo Family
Tuesday 9:00 a.m. + Judith McCarthy
Thursday 9:00 a.m. + John Parker
Friday 8:00 a.m. + Martin Shore

TREASURY REPORT SUNDAY
March 23 & 24, 2019
Total Plate Collection \$1,406.00
Second Collection for Maintenance \$368.00
Thank you and May God bless you!

Christ Child Men’s Club
Our next meeting and dinner will be at 6:30 pm. This coming Wednesday **April 10, 2019**
“Together, supporting each other, we can do great things.”

We pray the ROSARY together every Saturday at 4:30 pm. Please come to pray for the families and our Country.

Every Friday of Lent
Soup and Pray the STATIONS OF THE CROSS. Meet at 6:30 pm. for Soup and then join your fellow parishioners to pray the Station of the Cross together!

2019 ANNUAL BISHOP’S APPEAL
Your gift is building Bridges of Hope

I am grateful for your gift to the 2019 Annual Ministry Appeal. It reflects the spirit of giving in its purest form – one of authentic love for God and neighbor. Your generosity makes it possible for the ministries of the Diocese to have real impact on the people we serve throughout our beautiful central coast. Thank you. Sincerely yours in Christ, **Bishop Daniel E. Garcia**
Our parish goal this year is \$8,000.00
God willing, and with your help it will be achieved.

Women’s Club/Prayer Group
We meet the 4th Wednesday of each month from 1 to 2:30 pm. in the Community Center. **Our next meeting is Wednesday April 24th!**
Our focus is social and spiritual at the same time; get to know our faith and each other better so that we can better serve the needs of our community. Please contact Ruth McCormick ruthmcc@flash.net

Help Needed for the Easter Egg Hunt
Your help would be greatly appreciated putting on our annual Easter Egg Hunt after mass on Easter Sunday, April 21. It is a fun Christ Child tradition!
We could use help in the following areas:
-Bring Easter candy to the Church or Community Center no later than Sunday, April 14th. The earlier the better!
-Invite your neighbors with children to come to our Easter Mass and Egg Hunt. It is a great way to reach out to our mountain community!
-Set up tables and get coffee ready the morning of the hunt.
-Bring easy to serve food dishes for everyone to enjoy the day of the hunt. –Help hide eggs before (not during) mass on Easter – Cleanup after the hunt.
If you have any questions or wish to help, please email reginadevlin@gmail.com (put “CCC Easter Egg Hunt” in the subject line).