



## FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

THEY SHALL NAME HIM EMMANUEL, WHICH MEANS "GOD IS WITH US."

DECEMBER 23, 2007

— Matthew 1:23

My Dear Parishioners,

As Christmas approaches, we have come to the time of the year when we once again reaffirm our faith in the Incarnate Word, who came as Light in the middle of our dark and cold human night to guide us on our way to the new and bright day of His Resurrection.

St. Matthew parish has already seen a glimpse of that light. We have initiated a process of parish renewal and we look forward to the day when we all will be united as One Body, with the same Faith, Hope and Love. Thank you all for your generous support this past year.

Our Christmas Mass schedule is as follows:

### Vigil Masses

Monday, December 24

5:30 P.M. (ENGLISH)

9:00 P.M. (SPANISH)

### Christmas Day

Tuesday, December 25

10:30 A.M. (ENGLISH)

12:30 P.M. (SPANISH)

**(PLEASE NOTE, THERE WILL BE NO 7:00 A.M. OR 8:30 A.M. MASSES ON CHRISTMAS DAY)**

*You and your loved ones will be remembered in the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass on Christmas Day.*

*We wish you peace, love and joy at this season of remembering God's greatest gift of all.*

*Fr. Guillermo Rodriguez, Pastor*

### BEAUTIFY THE SEASON

Our church always looks beautiful during the Christmas season thanks in large part to your generosity. **Please plan to donate some poinsettias this year. You may bring them to the rectory anytime today (Sunday).**

### FAITH FORMATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Members are asked to save Monday, January 7th at 7:00 p.m. for our next meeting. There will be an evaluation of the Ministry Enrichment Day and consideration given to speakers we might invite in the future.

### SUMMONED BY GOD

As Christmas draws near, Advent's scriptures lure us into a world of dreams, signs, wonders, and the miracle of the virgin birth. Too often we allow the great stories of our faith, the ones that are most familiar, simply to wash over us. Today's Gospel account of the events leading up to the birth of the Lord reads like a present-day soap opera. Yet Joseph's courage, even in the midst of what must have been an incredibly confusing time, provides a model for us. Each week, we are summoned by God to embrace the way of goodness and truth through the proclamation of God's holy word. Like Joseph, we are called to do as the Lord commands us. As we stand at the threshold of Christmas, let us have the courage to be open to whatever it is that the Lord will require of us as we celebrate the miracle of Bethlehem.

### HELP FOR THE HOMELESS AND UNEMPLOYED

When you are asked for help from people on the street but cannot assist them with monetary donations you might want to offer them information on locations in Long Beach where they can receive help. Today we have cards which include this information. They are located in a basket next to the Sacred Heart statue. You are welcome to take several and pass them along to those in need.

### END-OF-YEAR CONTRIBUTION STATEMENTS

The parish office will send end-of-year contribution statements to those parishioners who request one. You may contact us in several ways:

**Phone:** 562.439.0931 x 0

**Email:** [stmatt@stmatthewlb.org](mailto:stmatt@stmatthewlb.org)

**Drop a note** to us via the collection basket

### ADULT CONFIRMATION CLASS FOR PRACTICING CATHOLICS

If you are in need of the Sacrament of Confirmation, you may apply to Sr. Dolores by calling 562.439.0931 x 5 for acceptance into the program of preparation which will begin on Sunday, January 13th. Following an initial interview, a person will attend the weekly 10:30a.m. Sunday Mass and a one-hour class after Mass. The regional Confirmation will take place in late May or early June. **There are only five openings for the class.** If you are interested, please call before Christmas.