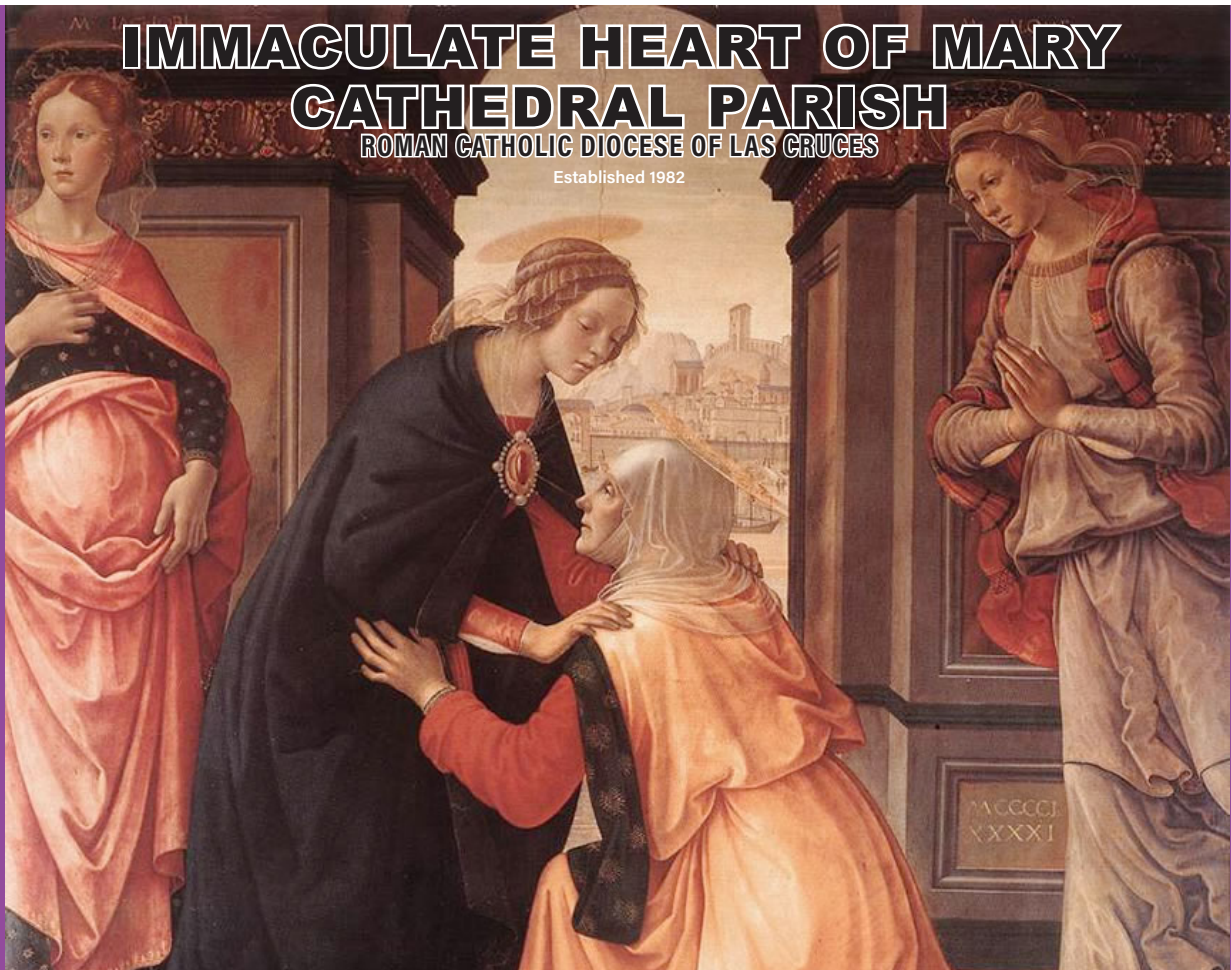


# IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY CATHEDRAL PARISH

ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF LAS CRUCES

Established 1982



December 15, 2024

1240 S. Espina, Las Cruces, New Mexico 88001

(575) 524-8563 • Fax: (575) 523-2252 • [www.ihmcathedral.org](http://www.ihmcathedral.org) • Email: [frontdesk@ihmcathedral.org](mailto:frontdesk@ihmcathedral.org)

## CLERGY

**Bishop:** Most Rev. Peter Baldacchino, J.C.L.

**Rector:** Rev. Alejandro Reyes Cardenas

**Deacons:** Deacon Ed Fierro

Deacon Ruben Gutierrez



## OFFICE HOURS

Monday - Friday: 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.



## SCHEDULE OF LITURGIES / MISAS

### WEEKENDS / FINES DE LA SEMANA

**Saturday Vigil/Vigilia los Sabados:** 5:30 p.m. (English)

**Sunday/Domingo:** 7:30a.m., 11:00a.m. (English)  
9:00a.m. (*Español*)

### WEEKDAYS / DÍAS DE LA SEMANA

**Mon. to Sat.:** 8:15 a.m. (English)

**Tuesday:** 6:00 p.m. (*Español*)

**Thursday:** 6:00 p.m. Holy Hour (*Español*)

**Friday:** 3:00 p.m. Divine Mercy Chaplet (English)

**Baptisms:** Call office for information

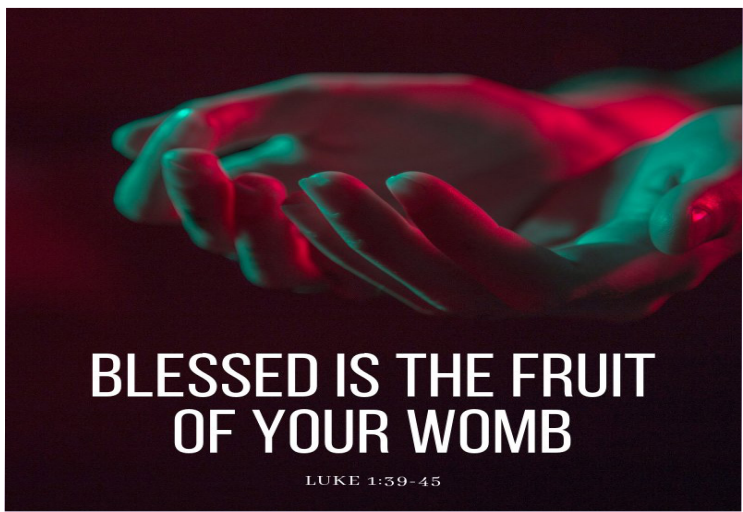
**Confessions in Church:** Monday - Friday: 7am-8am

Sat.: 4pm-5pm

**OR ANYTIME BY APPOINTMENT WITH ONE OF THE PRIESTS**

**Anointing of the Sick:** Upon Request

**Marriage:** Call Parish Office for Preparation at least 6 months  
in advance and before setting a firm date.



Registration: We welcome new parishioners, fall visitors and visiting friends to our parish. New members are encouraged to visit the IHM office to complete a registration form. We encourage you to use your envelope even if your donation is a modest one; this helps us to know that you are an active parishioner.





# RECENT EVENTS

1. Las posadas 2024 at the homes of our parishioners
2. The apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe story
3. Our Lady of Guadalupe procession
4. Our Lady of Guadalupe celebration





**"Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled." Lk 1:39-45**

It has been said that this is a difficult time for the church, because we are living a crisis of faith. People do not profess their faith as in the past, and many have left the church. This can be seen in the empty pews during the Sunday celebrations. We have the tendency to blame many for the falling away of people from the church but I strongly believe that we are responsible for our own actions, and there is such indifference and even a fear to serve or commit. Where does this come from?

Mary is always a model of faith for Catholics during this challenging time. In addition, God promised to be with us, and He is with us. I don't understand what we are looking for in other places. God's presence shall be the reason for our Joy. Where does dissatisfaction and unhappiness come from? Is it that we are looking for something else rather than for God?

Jesus was and is the greatest joy of Mary and, He shall be for us the reason of this season's joy!

"To Mary was granted the blessedness of being the mother of the son of God. Well might her heart be filled with wondering, tremulous joy at so great a privilege. Yet that very blessedness was to be a sword to pierce her heart. It means that someday she will see her son hanging on a cross. God does not choose a person for ease and comfort and selfish joy but for a task that will take all the head and heart and hand can bring to it" Willian Barclay, the Gospel of Luke, p.14.

Mary's joy is not a selfish joy. How many times are we tempted to be wanting to be happy, but just us, just our families and those whom I love? But what about the rest, those whom I don't even know, those that I am supposed to see as brothers and sisters, and those who are in the peripheries of my heart.

Our mother Mary comes and visits us very often and she wants to share with us her joy. We sometimes ignore her, when instead we should follow the example of John the Baptist and his mother Elizabeth: "When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the infant leaped in her womb." Why have we lost joy? Why are we so grouchy and angry? Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit! And you and I, what is in our hearts? Is it filled with the Holy Spirit? Or is full of resentment?

The Holy Spirit causes Elizabeth to cry out in a loud voice the joy of Jesus and Mary's visit! Therefore, you and I should ask the Holy Spirit to fill us with his joy so that this coming Christmas might be a day of salvation. Elizabeth praised God by saying "Blessed is the fruit of your womb. And how does this happen to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" She is aware that our blessed mother's visit and Jesus in her womb is a privilege and not her right!

How many times have we become ungrateful because we think we deserve all the honors of the world, and that all shall serve us and look at us because we are the special ones. Elizabeth places Jesus at the center and that's the reason of both her and her baby's joy! This is precisely what we shall do this Christmas; let Jesus be the reason of your joy, of your family gatherings and even your church gathering. When Jesus and His blessed mother are present, everything will have meaning. This last week is an opportunity for us to prepare Jesus' manger in our hearts so that may he can be born right there and give meaning to our lives.

Happy Fourth Sunday of Advent 2024.

Sincerely, Father Alejandro Reyes Cardenas, Rector

**"Bienaventurada tú que has creído, porque se cumplirá lo que te fue dicho de parte del Señor." Lc 1:39-45**

Se ha dicho que este es un tiempo difícil para la iglesia, porque estamos viviendo una crisis de fe. La gente no profesa su fe como en el pasado, y muchos han abandonado la iglesia. Esto se puede ver en las bancas vacías durante las celebraciones dominicales. Tenemos la tendencia a culpar a muchos por el alejamiento de la gente de la iglesia, pero creo firmemente que somos responsables de nuestras propias acciones, y hay tanta indiferencia e incluso un miedo a servir o comprometerse. ¿De dónde viene esto?

María es siempre un modelo de fe para los católicos durante este tiempo desafiante. Además, Dios prometió estar con nosotros, y Él está con nosotros. No entiendo qué estamos buscando en otros lugares. La presencia de Dios será la razón de nuestra alegría. ¿De dónde viene la insatisfacción y la infelicidad? ¿Será que buscamos algo más que a Dios?

Jesús fue y es la mayor alegría de María y Él será para nosotros la razón de la alegría de esta temporada.

"A María le fue concedida la bendición de ser la madre del hijo de Dios. Bien podía su corazón llenarse de asombro y alegría trémula por tan gran privilegio. Sin embargo, esa misma bendición iba a ser una espada que atravesaría su corazón. Significa que algún día verá a su hijo colgado en una cruz.

Dios no elige a una persona para la comodidad y la alegría egoísta, sino para una tarea que requerirá todo el esfuerzo de su cabeza, corazón y manos"

Willian Barclay, el Evangelio de Lucas, p. 14.

La alegría de María no es una alegría egoísta. ¿Cuántas veces nos vemos tentados a querer ser felices, pero sólo nosotros, sólo nuestra familia y aquellos a quienes amo? Pero ¿qué pasa con los demás, aquellos que ni siquiera conozco, aquellos que debo ver como hermanos y hermanas, y aquellos que están en las periferias de mi corazón? Nuestra madre María viene a visitarnos muy a menudo y quiere compartir con nosotros su alegría. A veces la ignoramos, cuando en cambio deberíamos seguir el ejemplo de Juan Bautista y su madre Isabel:

"Cuando Isabel oyó el saludo de María, el niño saltó en su seno". ¿Por qué hemos perdido la alegría? ¿Por qué estamos tan malhumorados y enojados? Isabel estaba llena del Espíritu Santo! Y tú y yo, ¿qué hay en nuestro corazón? ¿Está lleno del Espíritu Santo? ¿O está lleno de rencor? El Espíritu Santo hace que Isabel grite en voz alta la alegría de la visita de Jesús y María. Por eso, tú y yo debemos pedirle al Espíritu Santo que nos llene de su alegría para que esta próxima Navidad sea un día de salvación.

Isabel alabó a Dios diciendo: "Bendito el fruto de tu vientre. ¿Y cómo se me ocurre a mí que la madre de mi Señor venga a mí?". Ella es consciente de que la visita de nuestra bendita madre y Jesús en su vientre es un privilegio y no un derecho suyo.

Cuántas veces nos hemos vuelto ingratos porque pensamos que merecemos todos los honores del mundo, que todos nos servirán y nos mirarán porque somos los especiales. Isabel pone a Jesús en el centro y eso es el motivo de su alegría y la de su bebé. Esto es precisamente lo que haremos en esta Navidad; que Jesús sea el motivo de vuestra alegría, de vuestras reuniones familiares y hasta de vuestra reunión de la iglesia. Cuando Jesús y su santísima madre estén presentes, todo tendrá sentido. Esta última semana es una oportunidad para que preparemos en nuestro corazón el pesebre de Jesús para que allí mismo nazca y dé sentido a nuestras vidas.

Feliz Cuarto Domingo de Adviento 2024.

Atentamente, Padre Alejandro Reyes Cárdenas, Rector

## MASS INTENTIONS / INTENCIONES DE MISAS

~ Readings of the Week ~

### VIGIL MASS/VIGILIA: Saturday/Sábado, December 21

- 5:30 PM † Joshua Gonzalez (by his Mom, Sandra)  
† Elvira Gallegos (by the Granados Family)  
† Jared Medina (by his Family)

### SUNDAY/DOMINGO, December 22

Mi 5:1-4a / Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19 / Heb 10:5-10 / Lk 1:39-45

- 7:30 AM † Victoria D Lara (By Suzanna Mejia)  
† Josefina Robles (by the Robles & Ortega Family)  
Almas del Purgatorio (by Lucia Gutierrez)
- 9:00 AM (Sp) Familias y relativos de Knights of Columbus & Veteranos de policias de Carreteras de Nuevo Mexico (por Manni Morales)  
† Manuel Frietze † Adelina Frietze (por Jesus Frietze)  
† Jesús A. Velazco † Rubén Velazco (por Eva Elias)
- 11:00 AM † Manuel y Beatrice Ramirez (by their family)  
† Virginia "Gina" Padilla (by Ralph and Margarita Padilla)  
† Dario Alaniz (by Beatriz Alaniz)

### Monday/Lunes, December 23

Mal 3:1-4, 23-24 / Ps 25:4-5ab, 8-9, 10 and 14 / Lk 1:57-66

- 8:15 AM † Daryl Lithgow (by Gloria Lithgow)  
† Rebecca Spires (by David Medina)  
Montella Family (by Victoria Leach)

### Tuesday/Martes, December 24

2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16 / 89:2-3, 4-5, 27 and 29 / Lk 1:67-79

- 5:30 PM † Ernest Rosales (by the Rosales Family)  
† Joshua Gonzales (by Sandra Guerrero)  
† Mark Maurice O'Connell (by Lydia Webster)

### Wednesday/Miércoles, December 25

Vigil: Is 62:1-5 / Ps 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29 / Acts 13:16-17, 22-25 / Mt 1:1-25

Mass During the Night: Is 9:1-6 / Ps 96: 1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13 / Ti 2:11-14 / Lk 2:1-14

Mass at Dawn: Is 62:11-12 / Ps 97:1, 6, 11-12 / Ti 3:4-7 / Lk 2:15-20

Mass During the Day: Is 52:7-10 / Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6 / Heb 1:1-6 / Jn 1:1-18

- Midnight Vaneska Lujan (by the Griffith Family)  
Gwynavere and Demetrious Griffith (by Mom and Dad)
- 9:00 AM † Maria de Jesus Lucero (por Joni Frietze)  
† Manuel Fritze † Adelina Frietze (por Jesus Frietze)  
† Charlotte Delgado (por Ysidro Delgado)  
† Eddie Gamboa (por su familia)
- 11:00 AM † Mary Fragoso (by Edward Fragoso)  
† Ernestine Olivas & Mikayla Perez (by their Family)  
† Sam † Enedina Tome (by Annette Davis)

### Thursday/Jueves, December 26

Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59 / Ps 31:3cd-4, 6 and 8ab, 16bc and 17 / Mt 10:17-22

- 8:15 AM † Antonnett M. Alejandres (by JoAnn Marquez)  
6:00 PM † Eloy Flores

### Friday/Viernes, December 27

1 Jn 1:1-4 / Ps 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12 / Jn 20:1a and 2-8

- 8:15 AM † Felipe Saucedo † Stela Saucedo (by the Saucedo Family)  
Souls in Purgatory (by Gloria Lithgow)

### Saturday/Sábado, December 28

1 Jn 1:5—2:2 / Ps 124:2-3, 4-5, 7cd-8 / Mt 2:13-18

- 8:15 AM † Luis D. Lara (By Suzanna Mejia)

## WHAT IS HAPPENING



*Jesus of Divine Mercy Chapel*  
**WILL BE CLOSED!!!**

From December 24<sup>th</sup> at 5:00pm to  
December 26<sup>th</sup> at 9am

*Capilla Jesús de la Divina Misericordia*  
**¡¡¡ESTARA CERRADO!!!**

desde el 24 de diciembre a las 5:00pm hasta  
26 de diciembre a las 9 a.m.

The Cathedral of the Immaculate Heart of Mary  
Building Project Fund Raffle

Tickets:  
\$25

GRAND PRIZE  
\$10,000

Two Second Place Prizes  
of \$500 each

Additional Prizes: Television, Ipad

Drawing will be held following the Christmas Midnight Mass on  
Tuesday, December 24, 2024

Tickets on Sale in the Parish Office

*Nativity of the Lord*  
**Christmas**

Mass Schedule

Children's  
Mass:  
**Tuesday,  
December 24**  
5:30PM

English Masses:  
**Wednesday,  
December 25**  
12:00Midnight  
11:00AM

Spanish Mass:  
**Wednesday,  
December 25**  
9:00AM

*Holy Day of Obligation*

*The Immaculate Heart of Mary*  
**Gift Shop**  
**Is Open!**  
**Monday-Friday**  
8:30am – 4:30pm





**PRAY FOR THE MEMBERS OF OUR PARISH WHO ARE ILL**

- |                       |                      |                                  |
|-----------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| Hortencia Butler      | Donna & Jimmy Graham | Jesus Fietze                     |
| Juanita Mendoza       | Yolanda Salas        | Samuel Gutierrez                 |
| Pat King              | Marko Artem          | Martha Legarreta                 |
| Ernestina Rodriguez   | Virginia Mike Ortega | Rena Carson                      |
| Freddy Castañeda, Jr. | Deacon Ed Misquez    | Tammy Martinez                   |
| Benjamin Mendoza      | Sylvia Briseño       | Linda Salaiz                     |
| Dylan Wilson          | Ralph Cadena         | Vicki/Peter Alvarez              |
| Daniel Telles         | Liz Garcia           | Sandra Lucero                    |
| Merlinda Moreno       | Alicia Romero        | Marissa Madrid                   |
| Pat Villines          | Jimmy & Josh         | Mary Benavidez                   |
| Tim Thomas            | Mary Mayers          | Melissa Benavidez                |
| Alice & Carlos Castro | Oscar Rico           | Jacob Villa                      |
| Emanuel & Micaela     | Mary Moyers          | Christopher Villa                |
| Fietze and Family     | Arcadio Garcia       | Terri Villa                      |
| Edward Frias          | Jimmy Martinez       | Bertha Lucero                    |
| Nellie Rigales Vigil  | Josh Willhite        | Sandra Ramirez                   |
| Inez Fietze           | Ethel Vigil Ebner    | Toni Fietze                      |
| Leo Alirez            | Caesar Lopez         | Mary & Tony Gallegos             |
| Michael Rodriguez     | Sally Lozano         | Cassie Hamilton & Melinda Moreno |
| Roni Trevillo         | Raymond Telles       | Josh A Lucero                    |
| Gabriel Granillo      | Richard Duran        | Jim Hirschy                      |
| Ed Fragoso,           | Lewie Chavez         | Manuel Garcia                    |
| Mother Maria & Family | Gabriel Rodriguez    | Mr. and Mrs. Gino Delvillar      |
| Raymond Matlak        | Gabriel Gomez        | Bill Chubb                       |
| Matilda Evaro         | Albert Medina        | Carlos Armendariz                |
| Briana Telles         | Silas & Bea Garcia   | Margie Armendariz                |
| Arturo Serna          | Jeannie Lucero       | Raquel Chubb                     |
| Angel Baker           | Priscilla Serna      | Ruth Laguna                      |
| Danny Gamboa          | Lorraine D Matteo    | Cathy Healthon                   |
| Frank Jimenez         | Les Flores Jr.       | Gloria Babb                      |
| Felicia Krynitz       | Albert Chavez Sr.    | Elenor Misquez                   |
| Everardo Meza         | Msgr. Juan Moreno    |                                  |
| Blanca Echevarria     | Daniel Jasso         |                                  |
| Jose Ignacio Garcia   | Isaiah Jimenez       |                                  |
| Amparo Espinosa       | Nayhem Jimenez       |                                  |
| Fatima Aguilar Ortiz  |                      |                                  |

**Collections: 12-15-2024**

|                |            |
|----------------|------------|
| 1st Collection | \$4695.00  |
| 2nd Collection | \$760.00   |
| Office         | \$3,003.65 |
| Gift Shop      | \$348.00   |
| Mail-ins       | \$327.00   |

**2nd Collections:**

December 22: IHM Building Fund

Mass Intentions Weekday: \$10.00 • Weekend: \$15.00 • Prayer Request: Free  
 \*\* Please request Mass Intentions at least 2 weeks in advance. \*\*

Is a holding a campaign for

**COATS**  
 2024  
**for Kids**

Three donation types are acceptable: monetary donation, new coats, or used coats in good, clean condition.  
 Note: Coat sizes should fit children between 1 & 17 years old  
 Donations go to the **Las Cruces Coats for Kids Foundation**  
 You can bring your money donation(s) to the IHM office.  
 Please make any checks payable to Las Cruces Coats for Kids. Any used/new coat(s) donations can be placed in the Coats for Kids donation box located in the church foyer or dropped off at the church office.

**Donation Deadline:**  
**January 12, 2025**



Thank you for supporting this worth community program that is co-sponsored by the Knights of Columbus organization.

**Compatibilidad de Belén Juvenil**  
**para jóvenes de 1 a 21 años**

**Youth Nativity Scene Competition**  
**Open to Youth ages 1-21**

Enter By/Ingresar por:

**Jan./en. 5**

**Prizes**  
**will be**  
**Awarded!**

**¡Se**  
**entregarán**  
**premios!**



**Contacte a la oficina para más información**  
**Contact office for more information**

*Solemnity of Mary,*

**Mother**  
**of God**

**January 1, 2025**

*Holy Day of Obligation*

**English Masses:**  
**8:15am, 12:10pm,**  
**5:30pm**

**Spanish Mass:**  
**7:00pm**







## Saint Anastasia, Martyr of Sirmium

**Patron Saint of:** People Suffering from poisons and weavers

**Feast Day:** December 25

St. Anastasia lived during the time of the Emperor Diocletian, and is one of the seven women commemorated by name in the Canon of the Mass.

Following the death of her mother, Anastasia's father gave her in marriage to the pagan Publius, but she preserved her virginity.

During the persecutions of Diocletian, Anastasia visited the prisons and cared for the confessors of faith. She would feed, doctor and ransom suffering captives. Anastasia's servant informed Publius; he locked her up and beat her. After the death of her husband while he was on embassy to Persia, Anastasia distributed her property to those less fortunate and suffering.

Arrested in Sirmium, she refused to deny the faith. Embarked on a leaking ship, she escaped and reached safety, at least temporarily. Captured again, she was burned alive.



## Santa Anastasia, mártir de Sirmio

**Patrón de:** Personas que sufren de venenos y tejedoras.

**Día festivo:** 25 de diciembre



Santa Anastasia vivió durante la época del emperador Diocleciano y es una de las siete mujeres conmemoradas por su nombre en el Canon de la Misa.

Tras la muerte de su madre, el padre de Anastasia la entregó en matrimonio al pagano Publio, pero ella conservó su virginidad.

Durante las persecuciones de Diocleciano, Anastasia visitó las cárceles y cuidó a los confesores de la fe. Ella alimentaría, cuidaría y rescataría a los cautivos que sufrían. El sirviente de Anastasia informó a Publio; la encerró y la golpeó. Después de la muerte de su marido mientras estaba en la embajada en Persia, Anastasia distribuyó sus propiedades entre los menos afortunados y los que sufrían.

Detenida en Sirmium, se negó a negar la fe. Embarcada en un barco con fugas, escapó y se puso a salvo, al menos temporalmente. Capturada nuevamente, fue quemada viva.

## Pope prays for victims of cyclone in Mayotte

Pope Francis prays for the victims of Cyclone Chido, which is feared to have killed thousands, and asks Polish pilgrims to remember Ukrainian refugees this Christmas.

By Joseph Tulloch

During his greetings to French speakers at this week's General Audience, Pope Francis said he was praying for the victims of the recent cyclone in the French



Indian Ocean Territory of Mayotte.

Cyclone Chido hit Mayotte on Saturday, leaving widespread destruction in its wake - thousands are now feared dead.

Speaking recently to Vatican News, Marc Bulteau of Secours Catholique, the French branch of Caritas, described the situation on

the archipelago as "truly apocalyptic"

With a population of about 300,000, Mayotte is the European Union's poorest territory, with around a third of its inhabitants living in makeshift slums. Most of these have now been razed to the ground.

At today's General Audience, the Pope prayed that God might "grant rest to those who have lost their lives, the necessary assistance to those in need, and comfort to the families who have been affected."

### Palestine, Israel, Ukraine and Myanmar

In his greetings to Italian speakers, meanwhile, the Pope prayed for peace in war zones, as he does at almost every single General Audience.

"Let us pray for peace," the Pope urged. "Let us not forget the people who suffer from war: Palestine, Israel, and all those who are suffering in Ukraine, in Myanmar"

And, the Pope urged, "let us ask the Prince of Peace, the Lord, to give us this grace: peace, peace in the world. War, let us not forget, is always a defeat, always!"

Speaking to pilgrims from Poland, the Pope added an appeal to care for Ukrainian refugees in the country.

"On Christmas Eve," Pope Francis said, "you will break oplatek - Christmas bread. May this gesture of charity, peace and forgiveness be an expression of an open heart to all those you meet on your path. Please continue to remember above all the poor, the lonely, the victims of the floods and our sisters and brothers from Ukraine."

## Pope: Faith is not the opium of the people, but encounter and service

To mark his 88th birthday, Pope Francis has released several excerpts from his autobiography "Hope," which will hit bookshelves in January, recounting his childhood in Buenos Aires and the logistical difficulties of his 2021 visit to Iraq.

By Isabella Piro

The "concentrate of humanity" experienced in Buenos Aires' slums, and the "arrow to the heart" experienced in Iraq in 2021, are central themes in Pope Francis' autobiography "Hope," written with Carlo Musso.

Published by Mondadori, an Italian publisher, the book will be released on January 14 in over 100 countries.

On December 17—the Pope's 88th birthday—two Italian newspapers "La Repubblica" and "Il Corriere della Sera" published a few excerpts.

### Childhood in the Flores barrio

"When someone tells me I am a villero Pope, I pray to be worthy of it," says Pope Francis, as he recalls the "complex, multiethnic, multireligious, and multicultural microcosm" of the Flores barrio in Buenos Aires, where he spent his childhood.

"Differences were normal, and we respected each other," he says, pointing to his relationships with Catholic, Jewish, and Muslim friends.

### The "contemporary Magdalenes"

Pope Francis tells of his childhood experiences of seeing prostitutes on the streets of Buenos Aires, calling it an image of the "darkest and most difficult side of existence."

As a bishop, he celebrated Mass for some of these women who had reformed their lives.

He recalls one woman, named Porota, telling him, "I've worked as a prostitute everywhere—even in the United States. I earned money, then fell in love with an older man who was my lover. When he died, I changed my life. I have a pension now, and I go to bathe elderly people in nursing homes who have no one to care for them. I don't go to Mass much, and I did everything with my body, but now I want to care for the bodies no one else is interested in."

Pope Francis calls her a "contemporary Magdalene." Porota called him one last time, from the hospital, just before dying, to receive the Anointing of the Sick and Communion.

"She died well — like 'the tax collectors and prostitutes' who precede us in the kingdom of God' (Mt 21:31). I loved her dearly. Even now, I never forget to pray for





her on the day of her death," he writes.

### Friendship with "Father Pepe"

The Pope recalls the prisoners who made clothing brushes, and recounts his friendship with Father José de Paola, known as "Father Pepe", pastor at Virgen de Caacupé in Villa 21. The Pope, then Jorge Mario Bergoglio, supported Father Pepe through a vocational crisis.

Speaking about those liminal areas where "the State was absent for forty years" and drug addiction is "a scourge that multiplies despair," the Pope affirms that "in these peripheries, which the Church must increasingly make its center, a group of lay people and priests like Father Pepe live and witness the Gospel every day, among those discarded by a killing economy."

### Religion is not the opium of the people; faith is an encounter

From these harsh realities emerges the truth that religion, as some claim, "is not the opium of the people, a comforting story to alienate individuals," the Pope insists.

On the contrary, he says, "It is thanks to faith and that pastoral and civil commitment" that the villas "have progressed in unimaginable ways, despite enormous difficulties." Just like faith, "every service is an encounter, and we especially can learn much from the poor."

### Trip to Iraq and "the arrow to the heart" of Mosul

From the drama of urban outskirts to the devastation of Iraq, Pope Francis' gaze remains fixed on a wounded humanity.

Reflecting on his historic Apostolic Journey to Iraq, on March 5-8, 2021, Pope Francis describes the "arrow to the heart" represented by Mosul.

"One of the world's oldest cities," he says, "overflowing with history and traditions, which had seen different civilizations come and go and was a symbol of peaceful coexistence of diverse cultures in one country—Arabs, Kurds, Armenians, Turks, Christians, Syriacs—appeared to my eyes as a field of rubble after three years of occupation by the Islamic State, which had chosen it as its stronghold."

Viewed from a helicopter, he says the territory looked like "an X-ray of hatred, one of the most effective sentiments of our time."

### The poisoned fruits of war

The Pope recalls the visit's difficult context, exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and security concerns.

"I was advised against going by almost everyone... but I felt I had to," he writes, referring to the land of Abraham, "the common ancestor of Jews, Christians, and Muslims."

He mentions a warning from British intelligence about two assassination attempts that had been planned during his visit to Mosul: one by a woman strapped with explosives, another involving a truck.

Both attackers were intercepted and killed by Iraqi police. "This struck me deeply," Pope Francis emphasizes. "It was also a poisoned fruit of war."

### An appeal to prioritize reason over conflict

In all this hatred, however, the Pope found a light of hope in his March 6 meeting with Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani in Najaf, an encounter that "the Holy See had prepared for decades."

Held in a spirit of fraternity in al-Sistani's home, it was "a gesture eloquent in the East, even more than declarations or documents, as it signifies friendship and belonging to the same family," the Pope explains. "It did my soul good and made me feel honored."

He recalls the Ayatollah's joint appeal to the great powers "to abandon the language of war, prioritizing reason and wisdom." The Pope expresses appreciation for a phrase from their meeting: "Human beings are either brothers in religion or equals in creation."

In addition to "Hope," Pope Francis' life will also be recounted in a film based on Life: My Story in History, an autobiography written with Fabio Marchese Ragona and published in March by HarperCollins.

## Francisco a los jóvenes: no a los trabajos humillantes, tengan sueños y metas

En el mensaje dirigido a los participantes en la tercera edición del "LaborDi", promovido por la ACLI de Roma, el Papa insta a las nuevas generaciones a no ceder a contextos profesionales "contaminados", donde es normal "hacer que todo salga bien", "sólo para obtener "prestigio social" o "dinero". La fría "actuación" de las máquinas siempre irá acompañada de la creatividad y la "imaginación" humanas.

Edoardo Giribaldi - Ciudad del Vaticano

Una invitación a no ceder ante peticiones que "humillan", que muchas veces hay que obligarse a "hacer bien" para abrirse camino en un contexto, el del mundo del trabajo, "contaminado" por modelos difíciles de aceptar. Modelos en los que el prestigio social y el dinero parecen ser los únicos objetivos. Ambientes en los que el "rendimiento" de las máquinas "no lo es todo", y donde es imprescindible apoyar "la imaginación con la que Dios nos hizo a todos diferentes".

### Saliendo de las "cuevas", estamos hechos "para la luz"

"Somos 'piezas únicas', ayudémonos unos a otros a recordarlo", es la exhortación que el Papa Francisco reserva a los participantes en la tercera edición de "LaborDi", el proyecto destinado a "promover y poner el trabajo decente en el centro" organizado por la Asociación cristiana de trabajadores italianos (ACLI) de Roma.

"Quizás el trabajo os ha parecido hasta ahora un problema de adultos. Como anciano obispo de Roma, quisiera decirles: ¡no es así!", explica Francisco, destacando el compromiso y la energía necesarios para el crecimiento de las nuevas generaciones. Cada uno puede "haber desperdiciado buenas

oportunidades", pero no debe cansarse nunca de salir de sus "guardias": esos refugios contruidos cuando surgen "confusión y amenazas".

"Pero en realidad estamos hechos para la luz, para el aire libre. Así, una vez superada la adolescencia, el escenario del mundo se abre ante vosotros. Puede parecer abarrotado y

distráido cuando llegue; y aún así, aún falta tu aporte, lo que siempre se te ha esperado. Con vosotros - y quisiera decir a cada uno: con vosotros - lo nuevo entra en el mundo. Todo, realmente todo puede cambiar".

### Una "revolución suave" basada en las relaciones y la singularidad

Desde el "grito de la Tierra" y su "modelo equivocado de desarrollo", el Papa reflexiona sobre la interconexión presente entre cada ser humano citado en la encíclica Laudato sí. El mundo del trabajo también es "humano", aunque a veces esté contaminado "por dinámicas y comportamientos negativos que a veces lo hacen inhabitable". En los entornos profesionales son precisamente "nuestros vínculos" los que cuentan más que "los números y los resultados". Cultivarlos, uniéndolos a la "conciencia" de la propia "singularidad -que independientemente del éxito o del fracaso-, puede desencadenar una "revolución suave".

### El corazón, "lugar de las decisiones", donde "surgen los sueños"

El Papa recuerda la imagen de la obra, propuesta durante la segunda edición de LaborDi, también familiar para las obras con vistas al Jubileo. Este año, sin embargo, nos invita a reflexionar sobre el corazón. Este, presente "también en los mensajes que os intercambiáis cada día", es en la Biblia "el lugar de las decisiones", donde "nacen las aspiraciones", "nacen los sueños", "las resistencias se hacen sentir" y "la pereza".

"Tú conoces tu corazón: ¡guárdalo! A veces puede dar miedo y puedes fingir que no lo sientes, pero sigue siendo nuestro, inviolable. Siempre podemos volver allí. Y allí, si tenéis el don de la fe, sabéis que Dios os espera con infinita paciencia".

### El "respirar en el cuello" que provoca soledad y resignación

El Papa denuncia la velocidad, a menudo opresiva, que caracteriza el contexto laboral actual. "Respirando en el cuello" de muchas personas, sus "muchas peticiones, a veces demasiadas indicaciones y recomendaciones", no deben alienar a las nuevas generaciones, apagar sus sueños, dejarlas "solas y resignadas".

"El corazón sabe notarlo y, cuando es así, debemos pedir ayuda y hacer equipo con quienes nos conocen y se preocupan por nosotros. Tienes que elegir".

### El riesgo de convertirse en "engranajes de una máquina"

La entrada al mundo del trabajo se realiza, según Francisco, "juntos". De lo contrario, el riesgo es convertirse en "engranajes de una máquina", donde aquellos "que tienen poder podrían hacer cualquier cosa con nosotros". Un modelo contrario a esta alienación es el de la ACLI, donde "las intuiciones del corazón" se transforman en "vínculos sociales".

"El corazón busca amistades, piensa sin aislarse, se calienta identificándose. El corazón puede ser flexible y generoso. Sabe renunciar a algo, pero persiguiendo el ideal. Sabe fijarse objetivos, pero presta atención a cómo se consiguen".

### La imaginación humana, "que crea lo que aún no existe"

El incumplimiento de estos requisitos pone en peligro "la dignidad humana de quienes trabajan, o no pueden encontrar trabajo, o adaptarse" a un trabajo "indigno". Las tareas de las máquinas deben ir acompañadas de la inteligencia enteramente "humana" del corazón, "la razón que escucha las razones de los demás, la imaginación que crea lo que aún no es".

### Los adultos no corrompen la "novedad" de los jóvenes

Finalmente, Francisco agradece a los adultos presentes, invitándolos a no doblegar a los jóvenes "a las razones de la existencia". "No corrompamos la novedad", añade, instándonos a introducirlos paso a paso "a los largos tiempos e incluso al peso de las responsabilidades", confiando "en lo que se siembra en sus corazones". Allí germina "la obra que no aliena, sino que libera".





# Important Dates at IHM

## Decorating the Church

### for Christmas

Sunday, December 22  
After the 11:00am Mass

## Christmas Tree Lighting and Posada

Saturday, December 21, 2024  
Following the 5:30pm Mass  
Join us for a community event  
which includes an  
IHM children's  
choir Performance

## Building Project Fund

### \$10,000 Raffle

Drawing following  
the Christmas Midnight Mass  
tickets can be purchased  
in the IHM office for \$25

## Christmas Events

### Before Masses

Tuesday, December 24  
5:15pm  
Christmas Hymn Sing-a-long  
11:00pm  
Pastorela Christmas Play

## Christmas Masses

*Holy Day of Obligation*  
Tuesday, December 24  
Children's Mass – 5:30pm  
Midnight Mass  
Wednesday, December 25  
English Mass: 11am  
Spanish Mass: 9am  
**the Solemnity of Mary,**

### Mother of God

*Holy Day of Obligation*  
Wed., January 1  
English Mass: 8:15am, 12:10pm,  
5:30pm  
Spanish Mass: 7pm

The Roman Catholic Diocese of Las Cruces requires that all clergy, employees, and volunteers undergo a **background check**, participate in a **VIRTUS Protecting God's Children Training Module**, and **sign a code of conduct** every 5 years.

For questions in complying with these requirements please contact our Safe Environment Coordinator, Mary Frances Garcias for Assistance. [mgarcia@rcdlc.org](mailto:mgarcia@rcdlc.org)

## IHM Catechism Announcements:

**No Class** December 25, January 1, and January 8  
**Classes Resume** January 15, 2025

## IHM Youth Group

**No Meeting** December 27, 2024  
**Meetings Resume** January 3, 2025  
from 6pm – 8pm



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