

Merry Christmas • DECEMBER 25, 2024

# CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

Catholic Parish



THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD  
FOR UNTO US

*a child is  
born*



CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION EXISTS TO *Proclaim* THE GOSPEL,  
*Worship* WHOLEHEARTEDLY, *Serve* GENEROUSLY, AND *Love* LIKE JESUS.

9510 W. 127<sup>TH</sup> STREET • OVERLAND PARK, KS 66213 • [KCASCENSION.ORG](http://KCASCENSION.ORG)

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## CHRISTMAS MASSES

**December 24<sup>th</sup>:** 4:00PM (*Church*),  
4:00PM (*Parish Hall*), 6:00PM,  
8:00PM, 10:00PM

**December 25<sup>th</sup>:** 9:00AM, 11:00AM

## WEEKDAY MASS

**Monday–Friday:** 7:00AM, 12:00PM  
**Saturday:** 8:30AM

## SUNDAY MASS

**Saturday:** 4:30PM  
**Sunday:** 8:15AM, 10:00AM, 11:45AM, 5:00PM

## RECONCILIATION

**Tuesday:** 11:00AM, 6:30PM  
**Wednesday:** 5:30PM  
**Saturday:** 3:00PM  
**Sunday:** 4:00PM

## PERPETUAL ADORATION

**Daily\*:** 6:00AM–9:00PM

*\*Closed Monday & Thursday  
2:00PM–3:00PM for cleaning*

**After Hours:** 9:00PM–6:00AM  
(Code Required)

## OFFICE HOURS

**PARISH OFFICE CLOSED: DECEMBER 24-26**

**Monday–Thursday:** 8:30AM–4:00PM  
**Friday:** 8:30AM–12:00PM

☎ (913) 681-3348

✉ AscensionChurch@KCAscension.org



## FATHER GARY PENNINGS PASTOR'S CORNER

### Merry Christmas!

What is it all about? I mean Christmas – what's it all about?

The very first line of the Catechism of the Catholic Church answers that question when it states:

God, infinitely perfect and blessed in himself, in a plan of sheer goodness, freely created man to make him share in his own blessed life... To accomplish this, when the fullness of time had come, God sent his Son as Redeemer and Savior. In his Son and through him, he invites [mankind] to become, in the Holy Spirit, his adopted children and thus heirs of his blessed life." (Catechism, paragraph 1)

That's what it is all about. It's about a God who so loves us that, despite the rejection of God by our first parents, He came to seek us and save us. In an act of "sheer goodness," i.e. pure love and compassion, God entered space and time to take on the limits of our humanity and to save us from ourselves. And the reason that God wants to save us is so that we might share in the very life of God – divine life!

Sound too good to be true? Well, it IS true! You are that special in God's eyes – yes, you! Despite your sins, despite your preoccupation with so many things that endanger your soul, despite how you so often resist true happiness and settle for a counterfeit "happiness," God came to seek your heart and to save you so that you might have a share in the very reality of God – His joy, His glory and His peace.

That is what Christmas is all about. If we really understand the true meaning of Christmas, how can we not respond by accepting the marvelous gift that God is offering us in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh?

I invite you this Christmas to open wide your heart to this great Mystery. Accept the gift of God's love revealed in Jesus. Receive it with joy and trust this truth which Christ has entrusted His Church to proclaim. It has the power to change the trajectory of your life.

Merry Christmas!



# CHRISTMAS MEMORIALS

These memorials are remembered in the intention of the Christmas Masses.



Sharon Andersen  
 Bob & Frances Andregg  
 John & Pauline Antonelli  
 Nicolo, Melania & Mary Antonelli  
 Irvin & Barbara Arens  
 Ervin & Bernandine Auffert  
 Marvin Auffert  
 Bob & Mary Baldwin  
 John Baldwin  
 Pedro Bato  
 Bill & Peggy Beeson  
 Mr. & Mrs. Arnold Belik  
 William Bertch  
 Blaine Matthew Billinger  
 Patrick Bins  
 Mary Blaise  
 John & Frances Blazek  
 Ella Blinco  
 Yuri Bondar  
 Members of the John &  
 Louisa Boor Family  
 John & Celina Bourquin  
 James Cahill  
 Joe & Dorothy Carnelia  
 Al & Jeanne Carver  
 Dennis Carver  
 Matthew Connaughton  
 Joe Conrad  
 Vince Costello  
 Chris Daley  
 Michael W. Daley  
 Willam & Mary Daley  
 Members of the Daley and  
 Trager Families  
 Glen Deitcher  
 Gary Denning  
 Ray & Helen Denning  
 Henry & Cora Deters & Family  
 Members of the Richard  
 Doran Family  
 Linda & Pearson Dubar  
 Joann Duncan  
 Members of the Ebeling  
 & Murphy Families  
 Bill Endsley  
 Frank & Annie Essner  
 David Farrell  
 David Fields  
 Mary & Joseph Fofonka

Loren & Joan Foltz  
 John & Terry Ford  
 Harry & Helen Franken  
 Jim & Kae Fredrickson  
 Richard D. Fry  
 Al & Bertie Geiger  
 Deda Gilbreath  
 James & Mary Gillespie  
 Members of the Godar and  
 Kreiter Families  
 Sandy Griesel  
 Lavon Gstohl  
 Judy Hale  
 Jerry Handley  
 Wayland Harvey, Jr.  
 Members of the Hawkins,  
 Flodin & Broxterman Families  
 Vern Healy  
 Ferrell Heeter  
 Art & Etta Heinemann  
 Mary Henderson  
 Rozalia Holets  
 Mike Houston  
 Math and Trellis Howell  
 Brad Hunter  
 Roger & Joan James  
 Ray & Adele Jansen  
 Glenn Jennewein  
 Teresa Kamler  
 Members of the David  
 Kauffman Family  
 Archbishop James P. Keleher  
 Members of the Kelly and  
 Lampe Families  
 Heather Kelly  
 Ken, Evelyn & Kenny Kelly  
 Ed & Bernadine Kerstiens  
 Jim Kiefer  
 Members of the Kneib &  
 Schillermann Families  
 Members of the Lally &  
 Tarson Families  
 Mary Ann Lane  
 Scott Leahy  
 Christopher LeBouvier  
 Joe & Lu Lepianka  
 Mary & Ed Lorenz  
 Members of the Frank  
 Luecke Family

Kelly Lutz  
 Linda & Angelo Micheletto  
 Traci Major  
 Grandma, Mary, Gerry, Alice,  
 Joane & Patty Malia  
 Delores & Stanley Malnar  
 Mr & Mrs. Arthur Marti  
 Blake Martin  
 Joe Martin  
 Joe & Lynn Martin  
 Maurice & Ila Martin  
 Marie Marvin  
 Chris McArdle  
 William & Mary McCarty  
 G. B. McCullough  
 Melanie McKenzie  
 Paul K. McNally  
 Jim Meyer  
 Angelo & Linda Micheletto  
 Richard and Charlotte Mika  
 Mr & Mrs. Thomas Moran  
 William Myers  
 Harry & Margaret Nelson  
 Charles & Genevieve O'Halloran  
 Julia Olinger  
 Crystal & Andrew Pawlowski  
 J. J. Pawlowski  
 Sandy Peneton  
 Opal & John Pfitzner  
 Matthew & Alice Pierce  
 Joe & Helen Pillot  
 Jim Pyle  
 Victoria & Donald Quinn  
 John Rakos  
 Joseph Rakowski  
 Phil Rauen  
 Mark Reed  
 John & Rose Reinecke & Family  
 Manolito Reyes  
 Douglas Roback  
 Wanda & Alex Roback  
 Delores Roth  
 Glenn & Mary Russell  
 Mary Ann Ruskamp  
 Santo & Molly Scavuzzo  
 William & Shirley Schaefer  
 Members of the Sell &  
 Gibson Families

Luke Sellhorst  
 Derek Settlemyer  
 Paul & Darlene Short  
 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Justin Sisson  
 Robert Stephan  
 Members of the Strantz Family  
 Helen Strong  
 Members of the Strother Family  
 Billy & Dixie Lee Stull  
 Bill Sumple  
 Matthew Szabo  
 Norman Szabo  
 Sally Teahan  
 H.C. & Sue Teegarden  
 Jack Thesing  
 Evie Tingelhoff  
 Members of the Totta &  
 Brennan Families  
 Jim Toyne  
 Bill & Garnette Treese  
 Henry & Gertrude True  
 Paul Unnerstall  
 Hilda J. Virgilio  
 Ken Voorhes  
 Members of the Vosters and  
 Drahus Families  
 Oscar Walrod  
 Betty Walter  
 William & Elizabeth Walters  
 Bill Weems  
 Members of the Bernard &  
 Teresa Weiser Family  
 Members of the Rudolph &  
 Mary Weiser Family  
 Bill Wellinghoff  
 Members of the Wietharn &  
 Rottinghaus Families  
 Alfred and Fran Wilmes  
 Joe Wisnasky  
 Joyce Wisnasky  
 W. M. & Nora Yeado  
 Dale & Leona Young  
 Don Young  
 Duane Young  
 Art and Nancy Zande  
 John & Mary Ziegelmeier  
 Fred Zielinski



# WHY CATHOLICS GO TO MASS ON SUNDAY

Contrary to popular belief, Catholics don't go to Mass simply to pray, give praise, or to hear the Word of God, or even to receive Holy Communion. While these are all important aspects of the Mass, they are not the primary reason Catholics attend.

The true reason Catholics are obligated to go to Mass is to offer an acceptable sacrifice to God. This may come as a surprise to some, but it is the most important reason we attend Mass. The covenant with Moses was ratified by blood sacrifice and the ceremonial law of the Old Testament had very specific demands on how to offer sacrifice. Failure to fulfill the demands came with great penalties (see Exodus). Would God be so arbitrary as to throw the notion of sacrifice out with the advent of the New Testament?

No! However the Old Testament sacrifices were but a shadow of what was to come (Heb 10:1). They could not in themselves save. Yet they laid the groundwork for what was to come. The once-for-all saving sacrifice of Jesus on Calvary completes and surpasses all the sacrifices of the Old Covenant. At the Last Supper, Jesus instituted a new covenant in His blood, when he said that His blood would be poured out to ratify the new and everlasting covenant.

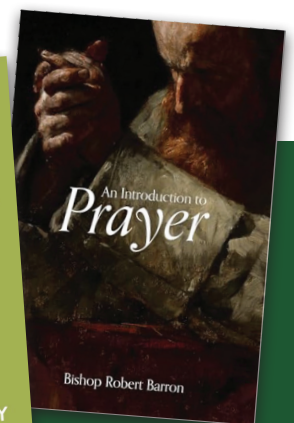
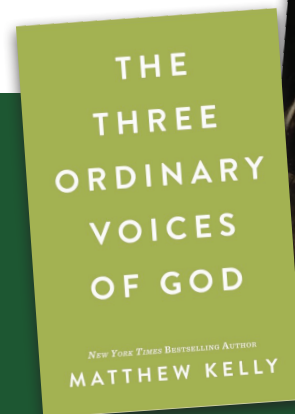
The sacrificial character of the Mass is manifested in the very words of institution: "This is my body which is given for you" and "This cup which is poured out for you is the New Covenant in my blood." In the Mass Christ gives us the very body which he gave up for us on the cross, the very blood which he "poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins" (see Catechism, par. 1365). The Mass is thus a sacrifice because it re-presents (makes present) the sacrifice of the cross, because it is its memorial and because it applies its fruit (ibid, par. 1366).

The Eucharist is also the sacrifice of the Church. The Church which is the Body of Christ participates in the offering of her Head. In the Mass the lives of the faithful, their praise, sufferings, prayer, and work, are united with those of Christ and with His total offering and so acquire a new value.

So, the next time someone asks you why Catholics are obligated to go to Mass every Sunday, remember that we go so that we can offer an acceptable sacrifice to God, to unite ourselves with the sacrifice of Christ on the Cross, and to join with the entire Church in worshiping God.

## CHRISTMAS GIFT FOR ASCENSION PARISHIONERS

Church of the Ascension is offering a **FREE GIFT** this Christmas. Find copies of *The Three Ordinary Voices of God* and *An Introduction to Prayer* in the gathering space after Mass, courtesy of the Adult Faith ministry.





# CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

We would love for you to join us in any of our many active ministries at Church of the Ascension. Participating in a small group, retreat, or Adult Faith class is the best way to make deeper connections, build lasting friendships, and grow in relationship with Jesus Christ.

If you want to go deeper in your faith, learn more about the Bible, or grow in relationship with Jesus -- we have something for you. If you have a child in kindergarten through high school, we would love to help prepare them for sacraments and grow in their faith. If you are passionate about serving others, we have many service opportunities and would be grateful for your help.

Christ, truly present, is central to all that we do. "The whole

liturgical life of the Church revolves around the Eucharistic sacrifice and the sacraments" (CCC 1113). We look forward to celebrating Mass with you on Sundays & Holy Days of Obligation. You also have the opportunity to receive the Eucharist with us daily.

You are also encouraged to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation as a regular part of your Christian life at least once a year or when in a state of serious sin.

Our Eucharistic Adoration Chapel is available to anyone who would like to stop in to pray or say hello to Jesus any time during the day. If you'd like to sign up for a weekly Eucharistic Adoration hour, please contact the church office.



**Adult Faith classes and retreats offer opportunities for in-depth catechesis, spiritual growth, and building Christ-centered friendships. Whether you are deeply devoted or looking to re-engage with your faith—we have something for you.**



Weekly Youth Faith Formation, Summer Youth Faith Formation, and Family Formation options are available.  
**913-681-7683**  
[KCAscension.org/youth-faith-formation](http://KCAscension.org/youth-faith-formation)

Relationships founded on faith help us grow and give us a sense of belonging which is why community groups are so essential to our spiritual journey. They transform our large parish from a Sunday Mass destination to an intimate family.



New Adult Faith classes typically begin in August or September and in January or February. Courses are offered during the day and in the evenings—so there is something to fit everyone's schedule.

Ascension's Youth Groups supplement our Religious Education programs, offering opportunities for our young parishioners to grow in relationship with Jesus Christ through meaningful friendships, activities, and spiritual development.  
[kcasension.org/youth-ministry](http://kcasension.org/youth-ministry)



In Service to One, In Service to All. The Knights of Columbus is a Catholic Men's fraternal organization open to all Catholic men ages 18 and over.  
**AscensionKofC.com**



**Youth Faith Formation and Ascension Catholic School offer formal catechesis and faith formation. These programs help prepare children to receive their sacraments and provide an educational foundation in the Catholic Faith.**



**Marriages and families are the basic building blocks of our Church. We want to help yours be Christ-centered, joyful, and healthy.**  
[KCAscension.org/spiritual-growth/family](http://KCAscension.org/spiritual-growth/family)



Women of Ascension is a ministry for all adult women in our parish - young, older, married, single, with or without children. We offer social events and spiritual enrichment throughout the year.  
[KCAscension.org/women-of-ascension](http://KCAscension.org/women-of-ascension)



Ascension Catholic School is a dynamic school community dedicated to serving children in preschool through eighth grade and to nurturing the whole student in Catholic values and academic excellence.  
**913-851-2531 | ACSEagles.org**



**Our community centers on relationships—relationship with Christ and with each other. Our annual parish events foster fellowship and social connections. We want to open our doors wide to our surrounding community and create an easy atmosphere for everyone to enter in. Will you join us?**



Ascension is blessed with active and generous parishioners, but we are always in need of more help. All of our ministries run on volunteer support. We also support many community outreach ministries.  
[KCAscension.org/volunteer-signups](http://KCAscension.org/volunteer-signups)



## STAY CONNECTED!

There is a lot going on in our parish, and we want you to know about upcoming events, existing ministries, and new opportunities. Scan to stay connected:





# Merry Christmas

Wishing you a joyous and blessed Christmas filled with the peace and love of Christ. May your hearts be lifted in celebration and your spirits renewed in faith.

from

Ascension Priests, Deacons, Parish and School Staff



## THE SEARCH SMALL GROUPS • JANUARY 9

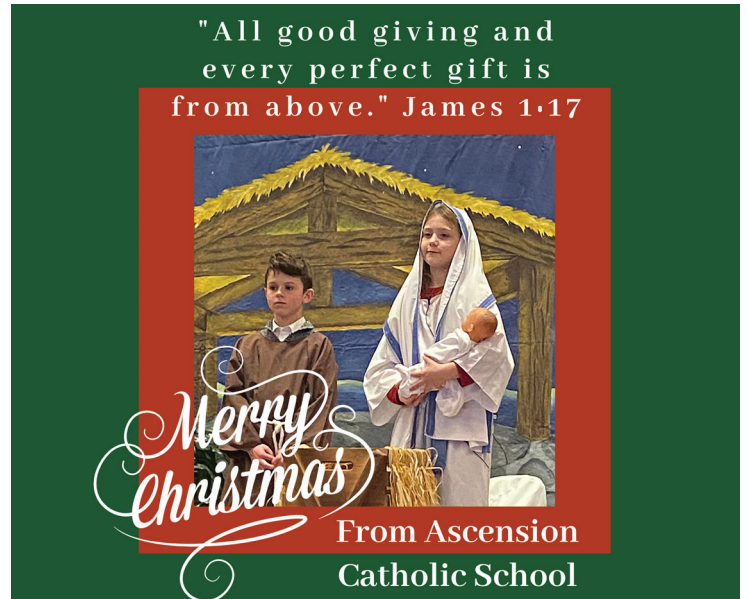
6:00PM, Ascension and Off-Site

Join a Small Group to Discuss "The Search" (free) on FORMED. Groups of up to 8 people will watch a 20-minute video and then discuss (Discussion Guide provided!). 7 weeks 1 ½ hour per session. We will meet at Ascension for the first "optional" session on January 9, 2025, from 6:00PM-8:00PM for the opportunity to meet your small group leader. Small groups officially begin meeting in individual homes the week of January 13-17.

Choose a group for YOU:

- **Couples:** Mondays at 6:30PM with Steve & Angela Salem
- **Couples:** Tuesdays at 6:00PM with Glenn & Cindy Bowers
- **Couples:** Tuesdays at 7:00PM with Jim & Joanne Burns
- **Couples:** Wednesdays at 7:00PM with Evan & Joanie James
- **Couples:** Thursdays at 6:00PM with Phil & Joyce Glasser
- **Couples:** Thursdays at 7:00PM with Michael & Susan Lally
- **Men/Women:** Thursdays at 2:00PM with Char Grothues
- **Men:** Wednesdays at 8:00PM with Patrick Earhart
- **Women 50+:** Fridays at 7:30PM with Katherine McGuire
- **Fathers of Young Children:** Wednesdays at 7:30PM with Adam Keller
- **Fathers of Young Children:** Wednesdays at 7:30PM with Jake Huber
- **Mothers of Young Children:** Register to Receive Specific Days and Times of Small Groups

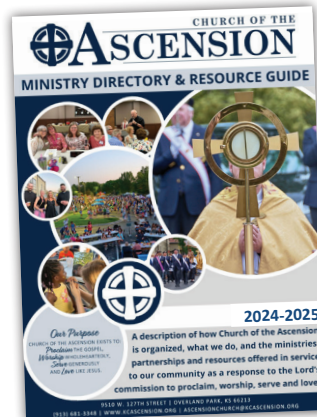
Register: Scan the QR Code or call the parish office at 913-681-3348



# 2024-2025 MINISTRY DIRECTORY & RESOURCE GUIDE

Whatever your stage of life or area of interest, there's a group where you can contribute and develop lasting friendships.

Please find a complete list of our ministries in our Ministry Directory & Resource Guide and links to specific web pages and sites below.



Scan the QR code:





## CHRISTMAS COLLECTION FOR CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Thank you for being generous to the Christmas Catholic Charities collection to help even better things happen this coming year. Please use your Catholic Charities envelopes, and put in the regular offertory collection during the Christmas Masses. If you are on auto-debit and do not receive envelopes, extra Catholic Charities envelopes will be available in the gathering area or you can write Catholic Charities in the memo line of your check. You can also donate on-line through your Realm profile by choosing the Catholic Charities Fund.



## ADULT FAITH FORMATION

Join a small group this January!  
In addition, check out the many Adult Faith classes we have starting in January!





# A gift for your marriage

## SAVE THE DATE



**MARRIAGE ENRICHMENT**  
(HYBRID COURSE)

**JANUARY 21ST** IN-PERSON  
KICK OFF, DINNER PROVIDED

VIEW 6 VIDEOS AT HOME

**APRIL 29TH** IN-PERSON  
WRAP UP, DINNER PROVIDED

To Register



CONTACT: MARCIA JACOBSON  
MINISTER OF MARRIAGE, FAMILY LIFE & VOCATIONS  
913-683-1348 x151  
MJACOBSON@KCASCENSION.ORG



SEBASTIAN D'AMICO

FEBRUARY 15, 2025

CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION



Dr. Ray Guarendi

MARCH 6, 2025

CHURCH OF THE ASCENSION

JANUARY  
21ST

FEBRUARY  
15TH

MARCH  
6TH

ADDITIONAL DETAILS AND REGISTRATION WILL BE IN THE JANUARY BULLETINS.

QUESTIONS: CONTACT MARCIA JACOBSON  
MJACOBSON@KCASCENSION.ORG

# ROOTED IN CHRIST

JANUARY 3RD - 4TH



I SAID, "PLANT THE GOOD SEEDS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, AND YOU WILL HARVEST A CROP OF LOVE. PLOW UP THE HARD GROUND OF YOUR HEARTS, FOR NOW IS THE TIME TO SEEK THE LORD, THAT HE MAY COME AND SHOWER RIGHTEOUSNESS UPON YOU," HOSEA 10:12

OPEN TO THE WHOLE PARISH (MEN AND WOMEN)

# Trivia Night

PRIZES FOR THE FOLLOWING:  
1ST PLACE, 2ND PLACE AND 3RD PLACE  
BEST THEME/DECORATIONS  
2ND PLACE BEST THEME  
MUSIC BINGO WINNER

**SATURDAY**  
**JANUARY 11, 2025**  
**7:00- 10:00PM (DOORS OPEN AT 6:30)**

HOSTED BY 

[Click here to Register](#)  
(as individual or as a team of 8):

\$25 PER PERSON OR \$200 PER TEAM



**PARISH STAFF**

☎ (913) 681-3348

✉ AscensionChurch@KCAscension.org



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Pastor of Church of the Ascension  
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& OUTREACH**



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**Mary Beth Stankiewicz**  
Youth Minister  
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**Derek Probst**  
Youth Minister  
dprobst@kcascension.org

**CLERGY & LITURGY**



**Fr. Colm Larkin**  
Parochial Vicar



**Fr. Brent Stull**  
Parochial Vicar



**Dr. Dorothy Brandwein**  
Music Director



**Deacon John Stanley**



**Deacon Kris Kuckelman**



**Deacon Michael Uhlmansiek**