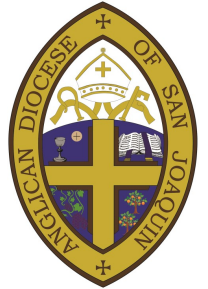


# THE SAN JOAQUIN ANGLICAN



## ***The Bishop's Corner—Vocations to Holy Orders***

*The Right Reverend Eric Vawter Menees*

One of the things I'm incredibly thankful for in our diocese right now is the number of people who are actively discerning vocations to ordained ministry. When it comes to sharing the Gospel, we can present our faith and our hope to others, but conversion ultimately comes from God. While we can't strong arm people into ordained ministry, we can encourage Christians to pray to God for help discerning their vocation. He does call some to ordained ministry. If we want our Church to grow, it is vital that we share our faith with others and encourage all Christians to pray and ask God what His call is for their life. In addition, if you sense that someone has a call from God to serve in the diaconate or priesthood, please speak to them about it and encourage them. I am grateful to the people in my youth who spoke up and said things like, "You know you'd make a really good priest!"

Having people turn to God in faith or discern God's call to the ministry is only a beginning step; we need discipleship programs so they can grow in their faith. That's why we have the Anglican Catechist Training School (ACTS) in our diocese, to equip catechists to disciple new Christians. For those who have discerned a call to ordained ministry, this means obtaining a theological education. Theological education can take place

*(Continued on page 2)*

## ***BISHOP'S SCHEDULE AND DIOCESAN CALENDAR***

- September 2 - 10:30 am - Diocesan Clergy Meeting on Zoom
- September 6 - Bishop at Trinity, Bakersfield
- September 7 - Labor Day - Diocesan Office Closed
- September 8 - 10 am - Rural Deans
- September 12 - 10 am - Commission on Ministry
- September 13 - Bishop at Holy Cross, Sanger
- September 14 - Holy Cross Day
- September 16 - 10:30 am - Diocesan Clergy Meeting on Zoom
- September 16, 18, & 19 - Ember Days
- September 19 - 10 am - Standing Committee
- September 20 - Bishop at Saint Matthias, Oakdale
- September 24 - Anniversary of Bishop Eric's Consecration
- September 27 - Bishop at Saint Clement, Woodlake
- September 30 - 10:30 am - Diocesan Clergy Meeting on Zoom
- September 30 - St. Michael and All Angels
- October 4 - Bishop at Saint Francis, Stockton
- November 6 - Diocesan Convention



through distance learning, but because so much of ministry is about interactions with other people, theological education is best accomplished in a seminary. The word “seminary” in Latin means a seedbed signifying a place where one is prepared for ministry and is not just a place to read books and prepare for exams. Indeed, seminary is where candidates for ordination are shaped for a life of ministry.

At this time, we are blessed to have three seminarians in residence at Nashotah House Theological Seminary and two seminarians in distance education; one at Nashotah House and the other at Trinity School for Ministry. These five are the future of ordained ministry in the Diocese of San Joaquin as well as the Anglican Church in North America. All of us in this diocese have a vested interest in their growth in ministry. We have asked our ordinands to write articles to the San Joaquin Anglican so people in our diocese can learn about them and their spiritual journeys. I encourage you to spend some time in prayer for them as their time in the vocation process is a difficult one where they face many challenges academically and spiritually. They need our prayers asking God to support them and strengthen them for these challenges.

On top of our prayers, our seminarians also need financial support. The cost to attend a seminary has gone up at the same rate as the cost to attend other colleges and universities. Thirty years ago clergy who graduated from seminary could expect a position that would provide a livable salary, health insurance and retirement. Now many seminary graduates end up in positions that necessitate a bi-vocational ministry where they work another job. We as a diocese need to support our seminarians so that they can enter this challenging world of ministry unburdened by student loan debt.

As a diocese we are tackling this challenge in two ways. First, the Standing Committee for our diocese has established a Seminarian Support Fund. We will be collecting donations from people around our diocese so we can lessen some of the costs associated with attending seminary. Pooling this money is a way we can help support the seminarians we have right now, but also the seminarians we will have in the future. Second, we’re encouraging our seminarians to reach out to family, friends, foundations, scholarship funds and churches in our diocese to fundraise individually. Your congregation or clergy may be contacted by one of our seminarians asking if they can fundraise or if your congregation as a whole can support them. I strongly encourage you to support our seminarians as you’re able and to develop relationships with them. You may find that your congregation is blessed by their prayers and people will turn to God more frequently to ask what His call is in their own lives.

This is a trying time for the Church, not only in our own country, but also throughout the world. We need to come together and out of Christian love mutually support and uphold each other. No man is an island and no man or woman by themselves is the Church. We need to ask God what His calling is in our lives. Being Christian doesn’t mean being an observer from a pew or even looking at a list of ministries and asking what one we like the most. Being a Christian means we need to, as St. Paul tells the Romans, *“I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship”* (Romans 12:1). If we do these two things – support our brothers and sisters in Christ and ask God how He wants us to work for His kingdom – we will see the hand of God at work in our lives.

*(Continued on page 3)*



Please join me in a prayer for vocations found in our 2019 Book of Common Prayer, page 650:

*Lord Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd who cares for his flock: We ask you to bestow upon your Church the gifts of the Holy Spirit in abundance, and to raise up from among us faithful and able persons called to the ministries of Deacon, Priest, and Bishop. Inspire them to spend and be spent for the sake of the Gospel, and make them holy and loving servants and shepherds of the flock for whom you shed your most precious blood. Grant this for the sake of your love. Amen.*

## Transitions

- We want to welcome the **Rev. Fabien and Charity Pering** to the Diocese of San Joaquin. Father Fabien took the helm at Christ the King, Ridgecrest, on August 16th.
- We bid fond farewell and Godspeed to the **Rev. Aaron and Sarah Prosser**, who as Rector left his position at Christ Church, Lemoore, to take a position in the Diocese of Pittsburgh.
- We give thanks to God for the ministry of the **Rev. Richard Menees** who completed his ministry as Interim Rector in Ridgecrest and will in October begin his ministry as Interim Rector in Lemoore.
- Congratulations to the **Rev. Dcn. Steve and Lydia Braun** on the birth of their daughter Abigail!

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## The Need for Friendship and Fellowship

by Susan A. Schnetz

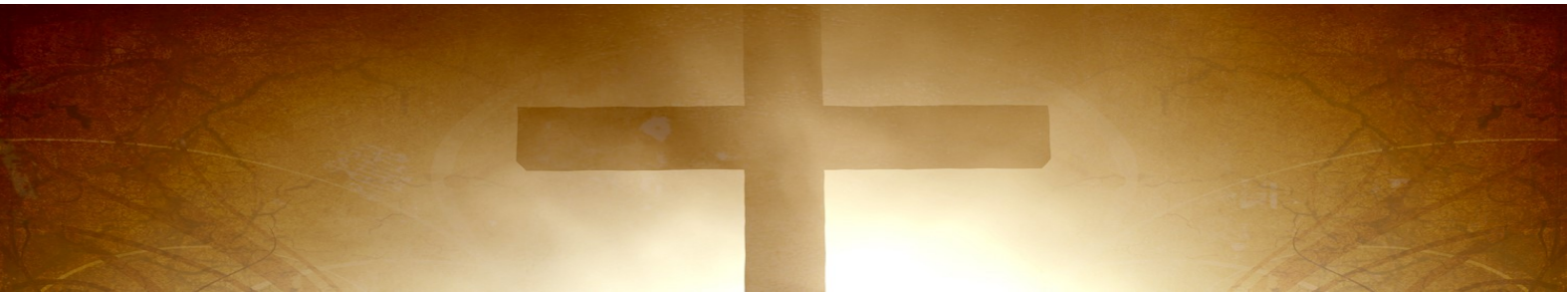
Independence is a prized attribute in our society today, but biblically speaking, it is not worthy of our purpose in life. In fact, the Lord formed the Church to be a community of believers that practice fellowship and friendship with each other. God created us in His image and from the beginning let us know we are in the Family of God. Indeed, in our worship services using *The Book of Common Prayer*, we are reminded of the Lord's themes of fellowship, goodness and the promise of salvation and life everlasting.

When we place our faith in Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit indwells us so we then enjoy a relationship with the Lord and friendships with each other. In God's design for His children, friendships within a community of believers serve to build each of us toward Christ-likeness. For example, when we look into the lives of the Saints, there is evidence of reliance upon a close friend, a confidante, or a body of believers for spiritual support.

Our country was founded upon Godly principles and sadly today our nation is drifting away from those principles. The numbers grow in our secular society of those who have embraced self-sufficiency and chosen to be independent of anything "religious." This drive toward independence from God often causes individuals to treat one another with suspicion instead of congeniality.

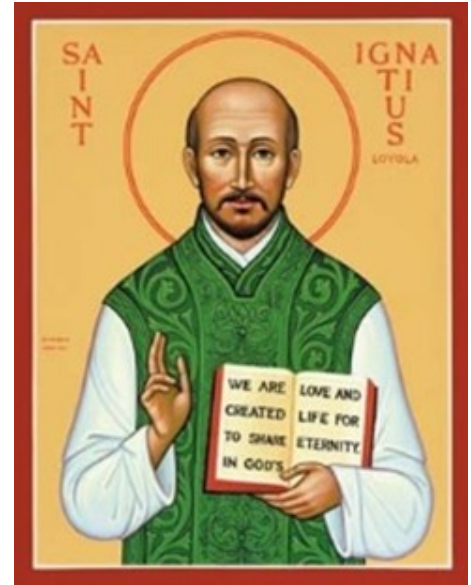
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Let's not allow this mindset to invade the Church. Scripture tells us to love one another, bear our brothers' burdens (John 13:34; Gal. 6:2; James 5:16). In other words, we're to give ourselves away to others and receive from them in return, and this partnership in love brings us fulfillment and joy. When we're hesitant to give to others, this in turn makes us reluctant to receive. As Saint Ignatius (d. 108 AD) taught, "Father, teach us to give and not count the cost."

The Early Church could not have survived without Christians making sure they worked in friendship with each other and scripture tells us they emphasized the importance of fellowship. Acts 2:42 notes, "And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers." In the Early Church, "... day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people" (Acts 2:46-47).



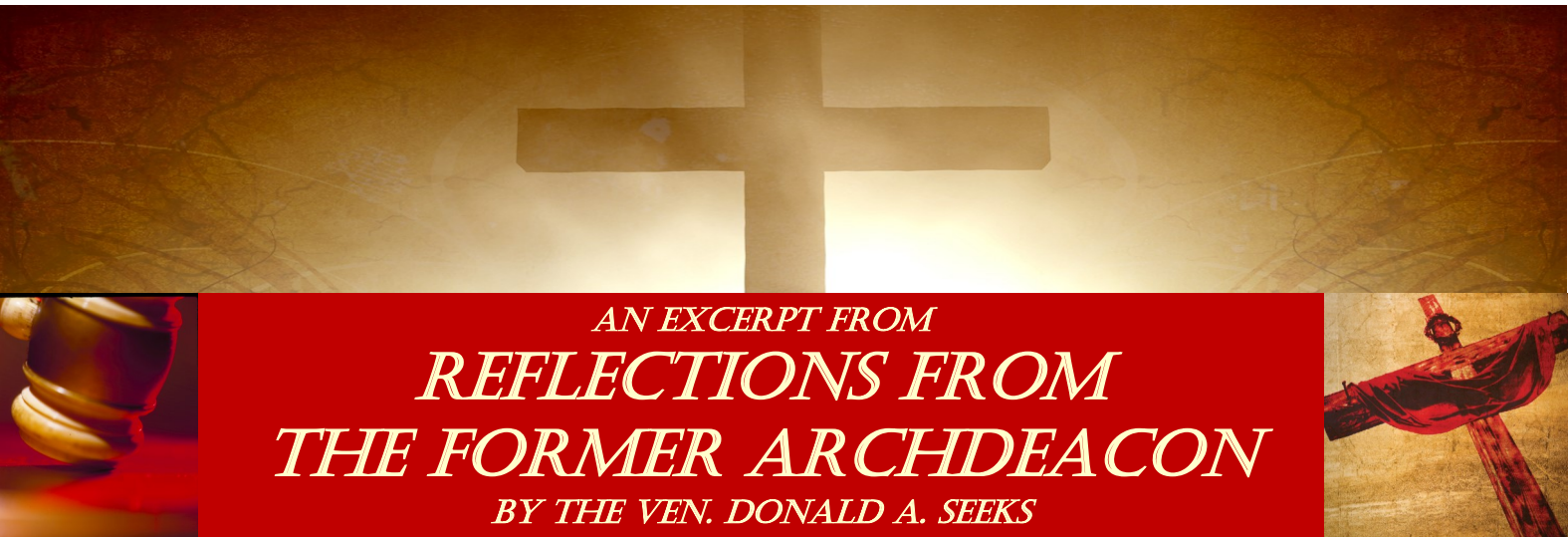
Why is Christian friendship and fellowship important? The New Testament expresses the idea of being together for mutual benefit. Hebrews 10:24-25 shares this idea, saying, "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."

Another aspect of friendship and fellowship among Christians is the impact on unbelievers. Jesus told His disciples, "By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another" (John 13:35). The love Christians have for one another can influence others toward faith in Jesus Christ.

Today we are reminded how difficult it is to not have in-person church services because of COVID-19. All across our nation – and our diocese – Christians are struggling with isolation, wearing masks that hinder accepting smiles, asked to distance themselves rather than greeting each other with a hug or a handshake. We took our gathering together in houses of worship for granted. We soon discovered that many aspects of our spiritual lives depend on being together with other believers to pray, encourage, teach, serve, and share life together.

This pandemic will pass and we will be together in-person again, having endured the dark days of the coronavirus. This isolation will no doubt work for good and our friendships will be more appreciated, deeper, and we will once again work together in fellowship to become more Christ like. Our charge will remain to reach out to those in our society who have chosen to be independent of God. "So then, my dear friends stand firm and steady. Keep busy always in your work for the Lord, since you know that nothing you do in the Lord's service is ever useless (Good News Translation)."

*Susan Schnetz is a published author, editor, and graphic artist and former computer instructor for a private school in Auburn, California and a junior college in Reno, Nevada. Currently she is the editor of the newsletter for Saint Mark's Anglican Church in Loomis, California where she attends church.*



AN EXCERPT FROM  
**REFLECTIONS FROM  
THE FORMER ARCHDEACON**  
BY THE VEN. DONALD A. SEEKS

## The Nature of Christian Giving

*Whenever one is seeking clarity in regard to what represents true Anglicanism, one can do no better than consult the deep writings of that giant of the Elizabethan age, Archdeacon Richard Hooker. In his Ecclesiastical Polity he demonstrated a unique ability to bring together and harmonize three great Anglican spiritual currents of his day. He was able to convey these spiritual currents in a very appealing equilibrium giving a classic view of Anglican theology, government, and discipline. Richard Hooker had intended to produce eight volumes but he died in the year 1600, shortly after completing his work on Volume Five. In that fifth volume, he has something to say about the nature of Christian giving.*



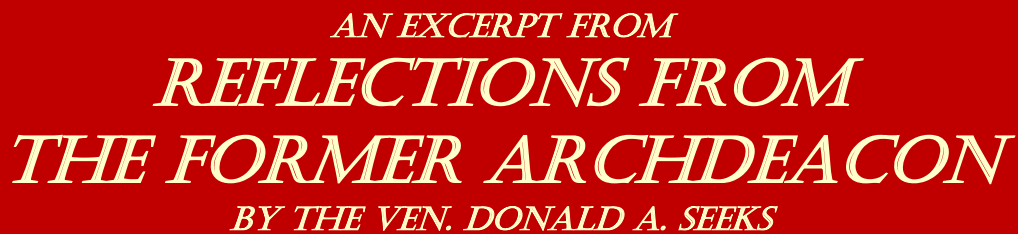

Richard Hooker wrote that if we ignored the actual practice of many people we might wonder what Saint Paul meant when he declared and used the term, “covetousness is idolatry,” where “nature requires” that God should be honored with our wealth. In practice many tend to honor their wealth as a god. One can almost imagine that Hooker was looking in on American society with our attachment to the material things of this world. He reminds his readers that our wealth and our material substance is “immediately due at any time” – those who think otherwise are mistaken. Nor can we get by with a token of acknowledgement of God’s sovereignty; Hooker calls this kind of offering as “a small, contemptible portion for charitable uses.”

God’s ownership over all things is stressed and asks, “Are not riches His, just as the days of our life are His?” We must recognize His supreme dominion by whose benevolences we have, our blessings, and acknowledge the things (all things in fact) that belong to God. Otherwise, we can never hope to honor Him to whom honor belongs.

One axiom which ought never to be called into question is that we are eternally bound to honor God with our substance in thankful acknowledgement that all we have is from Him. We offer the same as a sign that we gladly confess God’s sole and sovereign dominion over everything. This is only a natural duty, as a part of “God’s Law” (Hooker). Without this awareness we can never understand the grace and providence by which all blessings come. Without this awareness we can soon forget that we are only tenants in this world – or that the notion the world belongs to us is our “absolutely free and independent inheritance.”

Archdeacon Hooker cites many examples of giving back to God as recorded in the Old Testament and concludes that “the tenth” (or tithe) is “number of nature’s perfections” because it is “the highest number in nature we can use without iteration of numbers under it.” Indeed, God demanded the tithe from His people not because God needs the money, but because we need to give if we are to grow spiritually as a result of our practice of stewardship. Hooker explained that ever more, “when we bring our tithe with a cheerful heart, we can season our offering with genuineness of speech such as, You, Lord, are worthy of all honor.”

*(Continued on page 6)*



AN EXCERPT FROM  
**REFLECTIONS FROM  
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Since we are no longer under Mosaic Law, but under the Law of Grace, we are not bound to tithe by legal directives. However, true recognition of God's grace requires response on our part. Hooker clarifies this saying that by our gifts of oblations to Him we acknowledge our thankfulness for all we have received. Our tithe is, therefore, an act of love and worship to God as Lord of all. While these thoughts are appropriate at any time, they are particularly so as we approach Thanksgiving.

*Note: Richard Hooker (1554-1600) is the premier theologian of Anglican religious tradition. Portions of his great apologia for Anglicanism entitled Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity, has been seminal for most Anglican theologians since the early seventeenth century.*



David Rudat's  
**Musical Notes**



A Great Hymn of the 19th Century

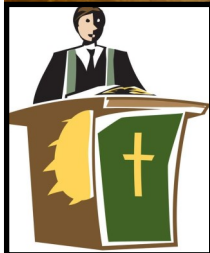
Once again Charles Wesley proves his word craft skills with his great hymn, *Lo! He comes with clouds descending...* In its day this was known as “sublime.” Wesley was able to get the greatest impact using as few words as possible.

Although the text is attributed to Charles Wesley (1707-1788), there was a similar text written earlier by John Cennick (1718-1755). He revised Cennick's text and this revision became the favored text to sing. Wesley wrote over 6,000 hymns and included this hymn in his 1758 book of *Hymns of Intercessions for All Mankind*.

*Lo! He comes with clouds descending* is a hymn most commonly sung at Advent. The hymn derives its theological content from the Book of Revelation relating imagery of the Day of Judgment. The biblical foundation of the hymn is Revelation 1:7, which speaks of the second coming of Jesus Christ. Verse one speaks of a “Thousand, thousand saints attending,” which is a poetic reference to an innumerable amount of saints attending Christ's Second Coming. Verse two speaks of the universal scope of His coming, “Every eye shall now behold Him.” Verse three speaks of His passion, “Still His dazzling body bears,” the scars of His crucifixion. Verse four speaks of all adoring Christ – He is King and reigns alone.

Charles Wesley was born December 18, 1707 in Epworth, Lincolnshire, England and died in London on March 29, 1788. *Lo! He comes with clouds descending* is considered one of the “Great Four Anglican Hymns” of the 19th century in a survey taken in 1885 by the Rev. James King for the periodical, *Anglican Hymnology*.





## News from our Seminarians: Jack Franicevich



**H**ello, all! My name is Jack Franicevich, and I am a postulant for holy orders out of Saint John's Anglican Church in Petaluma. I grew up in a local Roman Catholic parish and attended parochial school until our family joined Saint John's.

When I graduated from high school, I attended Biola University majoring in business and also explored biblically-based literature. During an early seminar on Shakespeare's *Richard II*, the thought struck me that the kings of the earth are seeking treasures of wisdom, even political wisdom, that are actually hidden in Christ (Col. 2:3). I knew Jesus and I knew that he was a king, but I hadn't put it together that he is the King of Kings (Rev. 19:16). That insight animated my study of Aristotle's *Ethics* and Cicero's essays, the Scriptures themselves, and to study other literature available in our curriculum.

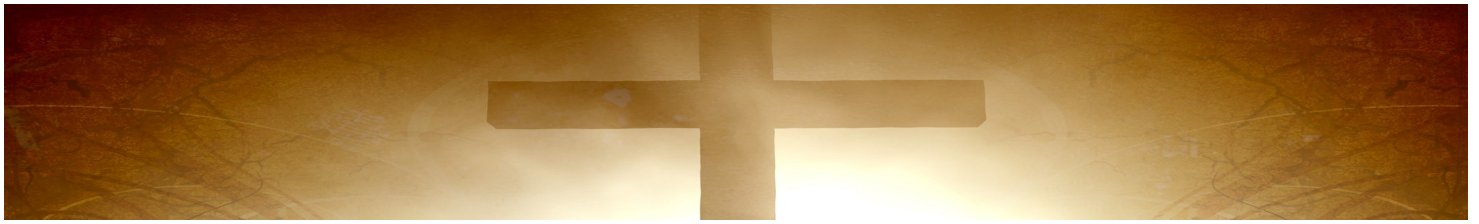
After graduating, I began studying for a Master of Divinity and working in sales copywriting and non-profit development. Five years later, I began to teach high school full time and was a part-time soccer coach. I earned a certificate in faith-based non-profit leadership from Wake Forest Divinity School. I was a volunteer in non-profit communications and advancement and defended a thesis on the liturgical and political aspects of the Sabbath for another graduate certificate in Scripture, liturgy, and culture.

This summer, I packed my car and moved to Wisconsin to begin a year of full-time study at Nashotah House where I hope to earn an advanced graduate degree in theology. The course focuses on the relationship between liturgy and politics in Exodus and Leviticus and pursues the mind of Christ, the everlasting King of all Kings. One of the projects I am looking forward to is designing and teaching two adult education courses at my parish: one on Christian friendship and another on feasts, sacrifices, and offerings in Scripture.

What I appreciate about the Anglican tradition is that it invites us to partake in the rich liturgy and service that glorifies the Lord that helps us to be more like Jesus. We celebrate the Eucharist – both as a memorial of Christ's sacrifice and a Meal in the household of God. Our tradition helps us to pray deeply, sing together as one voice of the One Body, eat like a family, and invite our neighbors into the new life of the Triune God.

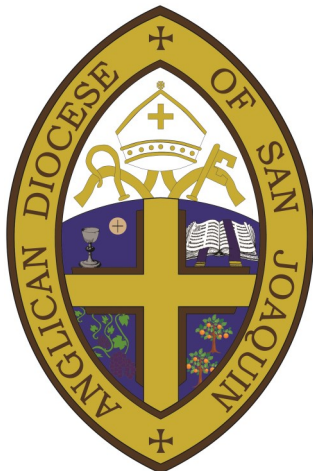
As you remember me in your prayers, pray for ongoing discernment of my vocation and for my sense of the Lord's providence in all things.

Before I go, the thing that really gets me going is making things with people and sharing them. If you'd like to download my first EP or a .pdf of my introduction to American thought textbook, write me at [jfranicevich@nashotah.edu](mailto:jfranicevich@nashotah.edu). If you'd like the best burger of your life and you're passing through Wisconsin, also write!



## Bishop's Note series--

The ***Bishop's Note*** is a pastoral message published weekly by Bishop Eric Menees. To subscribe, send an email message with your email to [receptionist@dioceseofsanjoaquin.net](mailto:receptionist@dioceseofsanjoaquin.net).



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Please send these to [melody@ctkridgecrest.org](mailto:melody@ctkridgecrest.org)

Thank you!