



Veritas

Parish Newsletter • Winter 2021-2022

Finding Jesus in the Darkness Advent: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow



Cover Art by Student,
Catherine de los Reyes

Saint Dominic Catholic Church

info@saintdominics.org • (323)254-2519 • www.saintdominics.org

A Letter From Our Pastor



A religious sister who runs a day-care center told the story of a three-year-old child who came running into the center one day, alive with typical toddler excitement. “Sister, Sister,” he called, “is this yesterday or tomorrow?”

Interestingly enough, during Advent, we celebrate both yesterday and tomorrow: we celebrate the “yesterday” of Jesus’ birth in Bethlehem 2,000 years ago; God becoming human, the beginning of our salvation. But Advent also calls us to prepare for “tomorrow,” that is, for the second coming of Christ at the end of time.

Many of the Advent Mass readings also have this dual emphasis on yesterday and tomorrow as they take us back in time centuries before Jesus’ birth, expressing the longing of the Jewish people for the coming of the Messiah. At the same time, the readings also urge us to ponder the future judgment when we will have to give an account of our lives before God.

However, as important as yesterday and tomorrow are, we cannot be like the three-year-old above and overlook today, because today is the day that Jesus wants to come into our lives. He doesn’t want us to spend all our time and energy looking back at the past or looking ahead to the future. He wants us to open our hearts to him here and now. In a sense, if we don’t open our hearts to Jesus today, then his first coming 2,000 years ago and his second coming at the end of time won’t really matter. Today is the day to bring him to birth in our lives. As St. Paul says, “Now is the day of salvation” (2Corinthians 6:2).

The thing is, our ego prefers us to live in either the past or the future rather than the present. All too often, our ego depends on the past

for its identity, and on the future for its fulfillment. We frequently carry within us regret, guilt and anger from the past, and fear, anxiety and foreboding for the future. But those are precisely the things Jesus wants to and can free us from now, today.

So, while Advent reminds us of the past and the future, the best way to live Advent is to focus on today and allow Jesus to come to us now, bringing us his hope, love, joy and peace while remembering the blessings of yesterday and preparing to face with confidence whatever tomorrow may bring.

- Fr. Roberto



Photo: Advent Wreath at St. Dominic Church

When we look at the Nativity

By the Palacios Family

We are the Palacios family, made up of our daughters Naomi and Nicole, our sons Juan Pablo, Jose and Josue; and we the parents are Carmen and Alcides. On January 1st, 2020, after visiting some churches near our house, we arrived in this community of St. Dominic, remembering with great affection the welcome that Father Francis Goode, O.P. and Father Roberto Corral, O.P. gave to us after Mass. We currently serve in the Usher's Hospitality Ministry as a family.

That day, when we introduced ourselves to Father Roberto and told him that we had just arrived from our country Nicaragua, he told us with great enthusiasm: "Who causes so much joy? The Conception of Mary! Long live Nicaragua!" This is a popular refrain in Nicaragua to celebrate the feast of the Immaculate Conception on Dec. 8 each year. And for us, this was the sign that God sent us to stay in St. Dominic, which throughout these months has come to feel like part of our family.

However, as December approaches, we cannot help but feel nostalgic for the celebrations and traditions of our country of origin. We miss attending church at 5:00 am, to pray the Novena to the Child Jesus, full of joyful songs and above all, starting with the celebration of Mass. We miss the prayers around the Advent Wreath that prepare us to receive Jesus into our hearts. We miss seeing the city full of Nativity scenes or ornaments depicting the baby Jesus, Joseph, and Mary, rather than looking at mostly Santa Claus ornaments.

But we know that the most important thing is to recognize that wherever we are together as a family and as a community, it is already a reason to celebrate Christmas, even when the traditions of our country cannot be fully lived out, because we make Christmas ourselves, preparing our hearts to be a manger for baby Jesus.

When we look at the Nativity manger, we see the great love that God has for us, and that makes possible what no one could have ever thought of: asking Him to become one of us. When we look at the manger, we understand that, just as God chose to be born in a cold, dirty, dark, smelly stable where animals were sheltered, likewise, He does not care to be born into our possibly cold, dirty, dark or smelly hearts. He asks us to open our hearts wide enough for Him to purify it with His light and with His love. When we look at the manger, we realize that God is not a lonely God, but a God-family, who invites us to be a family among ourselves, in our parish community.

Before our conversion, Christmas made us focus more on materialism. But now that we have known about God's love, it makes us focus on what is most important: the love that God has for us, and we reflect on how we are responding as a family to such Love. We meditate on how we are responding to that incomprehensible love, knowing that God gave up His only begotten Son to ransom a slave, as the Exsultet tells us at the Easter Vigil.

A love this great ... cannot go unanswered!



Jesus is not merely the Roman God of the Sun

By Fr. Isaiah Mary Molano OP

Around December 19th or so, certain cable channels will put on programs that will compare and contrast the Roman Empire and the Birth of Christ Jesus. They will talk about the historicity of Jesus, and question (1) if Jesus existed at all and/or (2) if he did exist, why is his birthday specifically December 25th? A common thing you would read is that Jesus is the Christian response to the Astarte, the Semite God of the Sun, whose Winter Solstice is approximately December 25th. The theory is founded on the presupposition that cultures that live right next to each other inevitably bleed and blend into each other, forming a cultural salad bowl.

Yet if one reads the Old and New Testaments—particularly the Books of Maccabees—you would see that our Jewish ancestors resisted, resisted, and resisted some more—to the point of death—many Hellenistic and otherwise foreign influences, in order to keep their culture, language, and their Covenant with the One True God.

So if Jesus’s birthday is not a Christian adaptation to their historical time and place, where does December 25th come from?

I posit that we look at the end of the Jesus story and work our way backwards.

Our tradition holds that, before His death and resurrection, Jesus was incarnate for exactly 33 years. The first moment of Jesus’ incarnation was—not His birthday—but rather the moment His Mother said “Yes” to the Father. In other words, Jesus’ incarnation for us began, not on December 25th, but rather, on March 25th, the feast of the Annunciation. Between March 25th through December 25th is a perfect nine months. Thus, Jesus’ birthday is December 25th.

But let’s go further. Late March is usually Springtime for those of us who live in the northern hemisphere. I have many memories of doing the Stations of the Cross outdoors in my black Dominican cappa (cape), frying from the heat. So what if Good Friday, the historical Good Friday occurred on March 25th, exactly 33 years after Mary’s fiat? In other words, what if the Lord’s greatest Annunciation (birthday) present to Himself was to give Himself to us through His very death? In other words, Jesus’s 33rd anniversary of incarnation was the historical Good Friday.

I adamantly do not believe the institutional Church chose December 25th in order to cash in on all of the Solis Invictus sales at the Roman forum. As with all things in our faith—including Jesus’ birthday—let us first look at the Cross, the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Jesus, to discover and marvel at the answers that it may bring.



O Antiphons

By Fr. Isaiah Mary Molano OP



My favorite parts of Advent Season are the *O Antiphons*. These occur during Evening Prayer (Monday through Friday, 5:30 pm). Towards the end of Evening Prayer, we rise and chant the *Magnificat*, Mary's song (Luke 1:46-55). Before we chant, the cantor intones a small versicle that will prepare us to chant this piece of scripture. This versicle is called the *antiphon*. The *O Antiphons* occur in the evenings between December 17 through December 23. These special antiphons illustrate the Prophet Isaiah's visions of the coming of the Son of God as a child among us. They are deeply Christological and magnify certain parts of our theology pertaining to the Son of God.

In a way, the *O Antiphons* are much like Simbang Gabi, the Filipino pre-Christian novena—both anticipate and prepare us for the great day of the Birth of the Messiah. Moreover, there is a smaller tradition that refers to the very composition of the Antiphon. Now, in the Latin, the *O Antiphons* are the following: *O Sapientia* (Wisdom), *O Adonai* (Leader or Lord), *O radix Jesse* (Root of Jesse), *O clavis David* (Key of David), *O oriens* (Radiant Dawn), *O rex gentium* (King of the Nations) and *O Emmanuel*. The first letters form a Medieval acrostic, meaning that if you reverse the first letters of each antiphon, S, A, R, C, O, R, and E, you get EROCRAS, which in Latin, means, "Tomorrow I am there". Thus, you chant "Tomorrow, I am there" the day before Christmas begins. Wow. What an illuminating and beautiful way to prepare for the Lord's birthday by contemplating that "tomorrow", He will be *here*, among us, to love us, transform us, and to make us His very own.

May this Advent Season fill you to overflowing with joyful anticipation for the coming of God as a little child. Amen!

The Great O Antiphons

December 17

O WISDOM OF OUR GOD MOST HIGH,
GUIDING CREATION WITH POWER AND LOVE:
COME TO TEACH US THE PATH OF KNOWLEDGE!

December 18

O LEADER OF THE HOUSE OF ISRAEL,
GIVER OF THE LAW TO MOSES ON SINAI:
COME TO RESCUE US WITH YOUR MIGHTY POWER!

December 19

O ROOT OF JESSE'S STEM,
SIGN OF GOD'S LOVE FOR ALL HIS PEOPLE:
COME TO SAVE US WITHOUT DELAY!

December 20

O KEY OF DAVID,
OPENING THE GATES OF GOD'S ETERNAL KINGDOM:
COME AND FREE THE PRISONERS OF DARKNESS!

December 21

O RADIANT DAWN,
SPLENDOR OF ETERNAL LIGHT, SUN OF JUSTICE:
COME AND SHINE ON THOSE WHO DWELL IN DARKNESS
AND IN THE SHADOW OF DEATH.

December 22

O KING OF ALL NATIONS AND KEystone OF THE CHURCH:
COME AND SAVE MAN, WHOM YOU FORMED FROM THE
DUST!

December 23

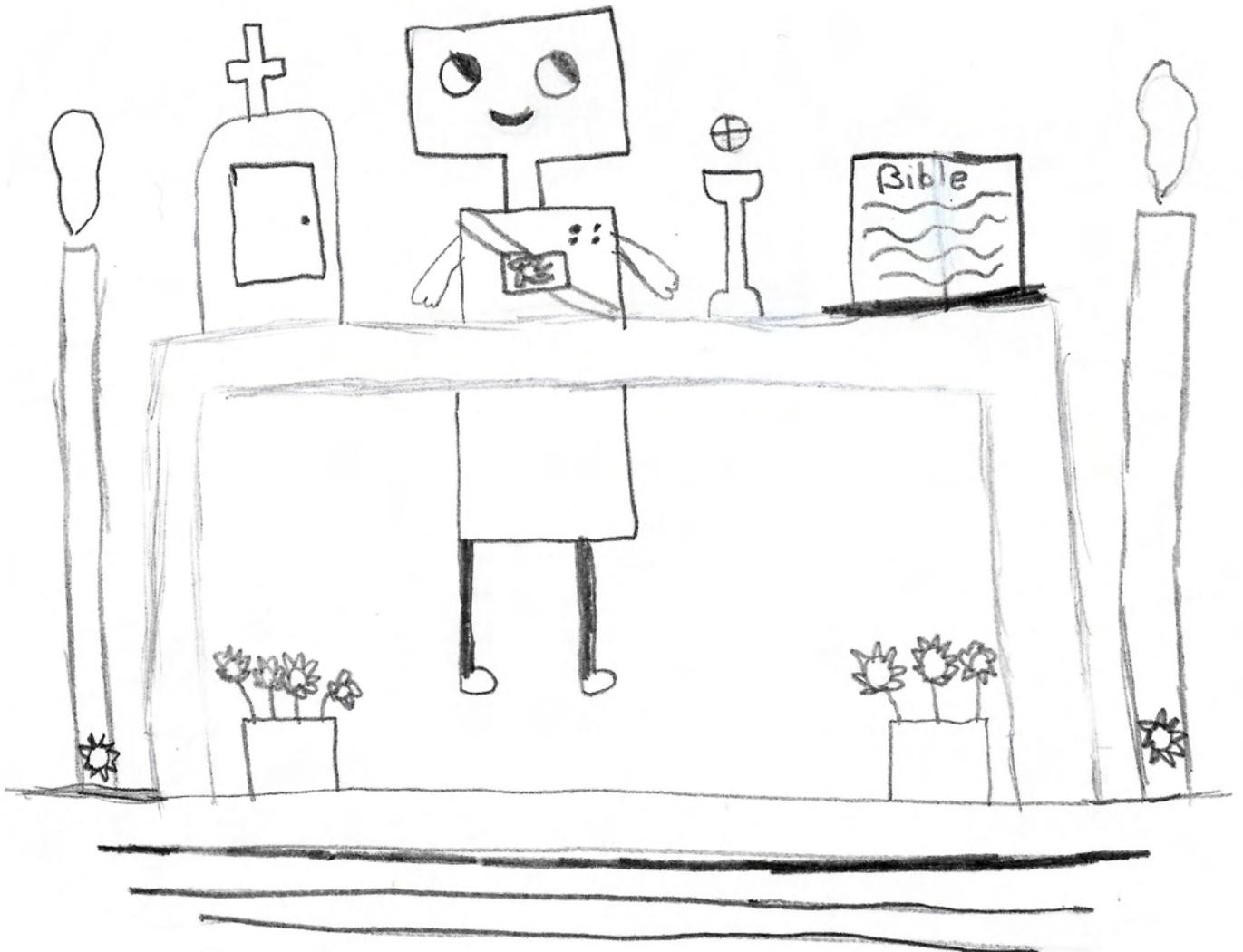
O EMMANUEL, OUR KING AND GIVER OF LAW:
COME TO SAVE US, LORD OUR GOD!

This December on the parish website, facebook page, and youtube channel, Fr. Isaiah Mary, OP will offer reflections on each individual O antiphon.

Student's Centennial *ART CONTEST*



What will St. Dominic Church
look like 100 Years in the future?



Artwork by Leilani Pulido - 1st Prize Winner (3rd-5th Grade)



Jaci Descalzo



Francesca Duran



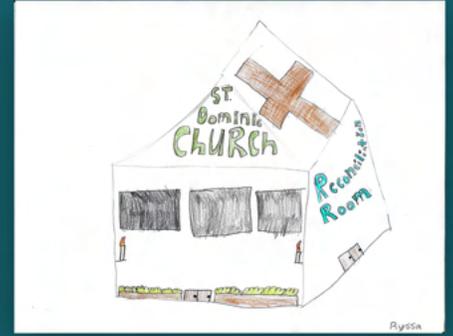
Lailani Lobos



Glacey Barte



Samuel Bunuel



Ryssa Dumlaio



Abby Fuentes (Outside)



Abby Fuentes (Inside)



Ava Garay



Daniel Lobos



Camila Martinez



Alexa Paez



Ryan Romero



Daniel Turrey



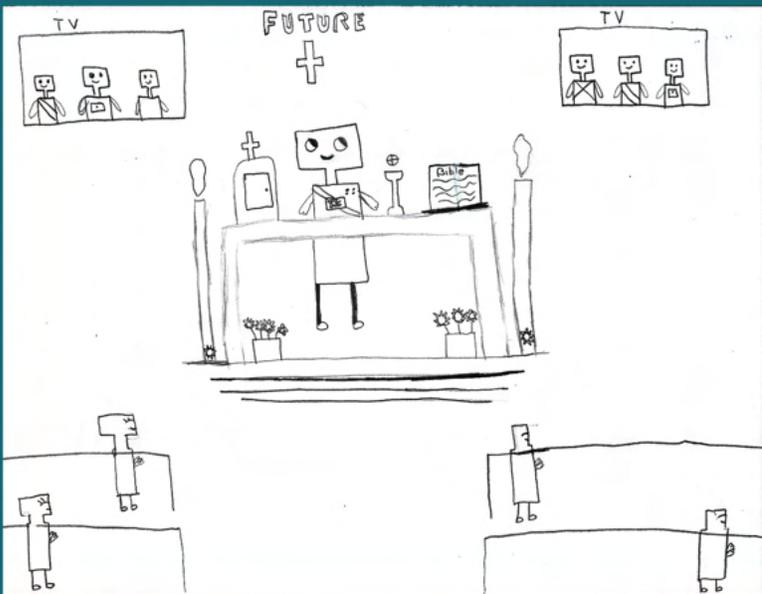
Pax de Vera

1st Prize Winners



Aaliyah Henriquez

"In God's Hands"
1st Prize Winner
(Kindergarten - 2nd Grade)



Leilani Pulido

"The Church of the Future"
1st Prize Winner
(3rd Grade - 5th Grade)



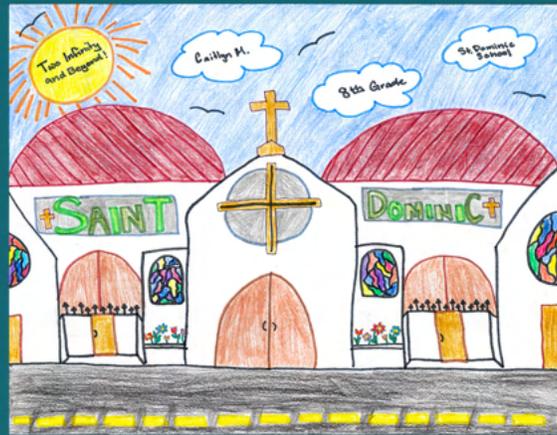
Catherine de los Reyes

"The Future of St. Dominic"
1st Prize Winner
(6th Grade - 8th Grade)

2nd Prize Winners



Julian Duran
2nd Prize
(Kindergarten - 2nd)



Caitlyn Martin
2nd Prize
(6th Grade - 8th Grade)



Derrick Campos
2nd Prize
(3rd Grade - 5th Grade)

3rd Prize Winners



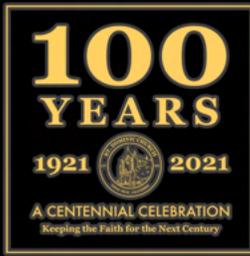
Julia Reese Magniza
3rd Prize
(3rd Grade - 5th Grade)



Noboru Honda
3rd Prize
(Kindergarten - 2nd)



Rex Lobos
3rd Prize
(6th Grade - 8th Grade)



**SAINT DOMINIC
CATHOLIC CHURCH**
EAGLE ROCK, CALIFORNIA

**Let's Ring in the New Year
Together in Style!**

2022

The year "2022" is written in a large, white, serif font. Below the numbers are several glowing, golden-yellow light trails that curve around the text, creating a sense of motion and celebration.

The New Year's Eve Dinner & Dance

*Tickets are on sale at the Parish Office. Price: \$50

Friday December 31, 2021 • 6:30pm - 12:30am

Parish Hall • Doors Open at 6:00pm

Dinner from 6:30pm - 8:30pm

* This event is for Adults (21+) only. Semi-Formal Attire Requested.

Families and Friends of Persons with Disabilities Ministry

By Lucy and Gilberto Landeros

Marcia is my youngest of my 3 children. She was born with Down syndrome when my two oldest children were 9 and 7. For the first two months my husband and I cried and hoped there was a cure. We came to a realization that that was never going to happen.

Having a disabled child is a lifelong journey. Since the day she was born until now we are constantly looking out for her well being. Marcia is now 41 years old and she has always been very involved in sports and other extracurricular activities. She has always been very active and we have consistently encouraged her to never give up. She has participated in gymnastics, karate, acting, hip hop, horse vaulting, powerlifting, soccer, swimming and folklorico dance. My two eldest children joke about how she has done so much more than both of them could ever do in a lifetime.

Marcia attended East Los Angeles Occupational Center for two years and received a certificate in child development and typing. Marcia calls herself a "young woman" and yes, she is a beautiful young woman! She loves to dance and she wants to be a dance teacher and someday, a singer. She is part of Straight Up Abilities where she fulfills her passion for dance and singing.



Photo: Lucy, Gilbert and Marcia Landeros

My name is Cynthia and I am Marcia's older sister. When Marcia was born, I remember being so excited because I was going to have a little sister. Marcia was my little doll. I loved dressing her, feeding her and caring for her. I did not become aware of Marcia being "different" until I was about 10 years old. I remember my mom telling me she had Down Syndrome but I didn't really understand what that meant. To me, she seemed normal so I continued to love her the same way. Today, Marcia and I have a strong bond. I look after her as if she were my own daughter. We do a lot of things together and my son, who is 4 years old, has an endearing bond with her as well. Marcia has grown up to be such a beautiful young woman. She volunteered at my school for 4 years where I work. Everyone knew her and loved her. To this day, I still have people telling me, 'We miss Marcia!' Marcia is loved by many and leaves a lasting impression wherever she goes.

For more information about FFPD Ministry, please visit: www.saintdominics.org/FFPD

Saint Vincent de Paul Society

Who does the St. Dominic Conference of St. Vincent de Paul help? Recently we sponsored students to attend Circle V summer camp. Leonardo Villa generously offered to share his experience.

Circle V Summer Camp

By Leonardo Villa

My experience at camp was like no other. It was fun. It was amazing meeting new people. The activities were also amazing and the best part is that no one felt left out, everyone was included. The food was amazing. The ribs were amazing and they were definitely my favorite. It was kinda weird because of Covid regulations but still it was very fun. All the counselors were super nice. They definitely made the camp lots more fun. My favorite activities were definitely the boat ride, game show night and the water fight at the end. The songs are still stuck in my head even after all this time. All the people were very welcoming which made it feel like a safe space; no matter where you were, you would feel welcomed. I enjoyed every second at Circle V and I hope to go again soon!

For more information about SVDP Ministry, please visit: www.saintdominics.org/SVDP

Children's Faith Formation

This year's focus is the "Domestic Church" (i.e. the church in our family's home) to strengthen our Church, one family at a time. We have incorporated family gatherings into the program to be led by parents and to include the entire family. Each household has received these boxes with guides and supplies to experience hands-on activities to embrace and understand the traditions of our faith and encounter Jesus in our daily lives.



Middle School Ministry

We have kicked off monthly Middle School Ministry meetings! This group is targeted to build a faith community amongst middle schoolers grades 5-8. Registration is free and open until May 2022. Meetings will be on Thursdays 7pm - 8pm: Nov 18, Dec 16, Jan 20, Feb 17, Mar 17, Apr 21, May 19.



Please visit <https://saintdominics.org/msm> for more information.



Girl Scout Troop #11175

Members Awarded Religious Recognition Medals

Congratulations to several girl scouts from Troop #11175 representing St. Dominic's, who, on Saturday, October 30th were awarded various religious medals from the National Catholic Committee for Girl Scouts and Camp Fire. At a mass celebrated by Bishop Trudeau at the Cathedral of our Lady of the Angels and co-celebrated by Fr. Isaiah, the girl scouts received awards for completing the requirements of their respective religious program. All of the programs encouraged the girls to learn more about their faith, to serve in their community and to foster their Catholic identity.



I Live My Faith Recipients: *(Grades 4 & 5-Sacraments and Catholic Living Themed)*

Natalia Mendoza

Sophia Rodriguez

Sofia Torres

Marian Award Recipients: *(Grades 6 & 8- Mary, the Mother of God Themed)*

Lia Bucasas

Caitlyn Martin

Ella Mendoza

Kayla Corletto

Kalena Martin

Samantha Rios

Catherine De Los Reyes

Jade Martin-Gomez

Madeline Zavala

Juliana Guardado

Spirit Alive Recipients: *(Grades 9 & 10- Discovering the Holy Spirit Themed)*

Aideen Alpuerto

Katia Corletto

Emma Martin

Special thanks to Troop Leader Claudia Pichardo-Guardado for her continued dedication to the girl scouts and for serving as the troop's program moderator.

Community at the Center

By Jay Cooney

This fall, Saint Dominic Church kicked off its Centennial Year Celebrations with the much anticipated Grand Opening of the newly renovated Fr. Paul Scanlon, O.P. Community Center.

The morning began with a flag ceremony by both the Boy Scout AND Girl Scout Troops. Following the presentation of the colors, prayers and remarks were given by Fr. Peter Rogers O.P., builder John Van Dyke, and our Pastor, Fr. Roberto. There was also a touching and emotional tribute to Fr. Paul Scanlon by Parish Pastoral Council member and life-long parishioner, Theresa de Vera, along with the presentation of a city scroll to mark the joyful occasion. To cap off the event, Fr. Roberto and Fr. Peter along with many generous donors to the Capital Campaign participated in a fun ribbon-cutting ceremony.

Inside the building, parishioners and guests were treated to refreshments and an array of historical artifacts and photos, decorated by our Centennial Committee. Visitors were given a free tote bag, and other Centennial gifts items were available for purchase such as mugs and tee-shirts. In the upper hall, ministries shared their faith and fellowship at the Ministry Fair. All in all, it was a joyful day of celebration with our diverse and beautiful community at the center of it all.

Now fully open for use to the parish, the Community Center will provide ministries and groups with a beautiful facility to gather and meet. With both large and small spaces available, state-of-the-art audio/video systems, and newly renovated bathrooms and kitchen, the building can easily accommodate many gatherings and groups at St. Dominic for years to come. Thank you to the many many people, from Fr. Paul Scanlon to each and every contributor, who made this dream into a reality!





Keeping the Faith for the Next Century

Celebrate 100 Years

SAINT DOMINIC CHURCH

CENTENNIAL MASS

SUNDAY FEBRUARY 20, 2022

**100
YEARS**

2002

1921 2021



A CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

Keeping the Faith for the Next Century



**SCAN THE QR CODE TO VISIT
OUR CENTENNIAL WEBPAGE**

www.saintdominics.org/centennial

Do you have news to share in **Veritas**?
Contact us: communications@saintdominics.org



Veritas
Parish Newsletter

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Pastor: Fr. Roberto Corral, O.P.

Editor: Jay Cooney

Proofreader: Jose Bayani

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