



## ANNUNCIATION CHURCH & ASCENSION MISSION

### The Church Environment Ministry: Setting the Stage for the Gospel Message

As a professional floral designer, parishioner Erin Nalani Kaholoa'a understands well the power of visual beauty. Each carefully designed flower arrangement or decoration has the ability to uplift our spirits, outwardly representing the joy experienced during a festive occasion, or offering comfort during times of sorrow and loss. Yet, in the case of our church environment, the surrounding decor plays an even more important role, visually reminding us of the unseen mysteries occurring around us.

"I believe that beautifying the church captures parishioners' attention visually first, then helping them become more receptive and focused on the liturgy," Erin says. "It sets the right tone."

When it comes to the Church Environment Ministry, adds parishioner Cynthia Esaki, every colorful banner, plant, or flower arrangement is symbolic of the liturgical season being celebrated. Each is designed to put us in the "right frame of mind" when we enter the church building, reminding us of the stage in Christ's life that is being celebrated and making us more receptive to the Gospel message. And, in the process, says Cynthia, we are "better able to give thanks and praise to our Lord" for the beautiful world He has created and His abundant blessings.

"It's our job to create a welcoming, inviting worship space that is aligned with the liturgical seasons," Cynthia says. "I love seeing the worship space transformed from Ordinary Time to Lent or Advent, and then to special celebrations like Easter and Christmas."

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*When it comes to the Church Environment Ministry, every decoration is designed to outwardly symbolize in some way the liturgical season that the Church is celebrating.*



# The Church Environment Ministry: Setting the Stage for the Gospel Message *continued from front cover*

To make this all possible, Church Environment volunteers gather together periodically throughout the year for roughly two hours in order to create a reverent and prayerful atmosphere. They order and arrange flowers and plants, carefully place things like lava rocks and driftwood around the altar, hang colorful banners, and even store and care for plants at their own homes when they are not in use at the church.

In the process, ministry members are able to uniquely use their gifts while also spending time in front of our Eucharistic Lord, basking in His presence and becoming spiritually refreshed through the peace and quiet of our church.

“I love being in the church when no one is around,” Cynthia says. “It gives me a chance, in the stillness and quiet, to have a special moment with the Lord.”

“This ministry has provided a way for me to use my own talent of being a floral designer for His glory, allowing me to thank the Lord for blessing me with such a special gift,” Erin adds. “It has also opened my eyes to the many opportunities our parish gives, not only to myself but for every parishioner, to become involved with such a great network of people and to learn more about our Lord and His Word.”

With the Christmas season fast approaching, the Church Environment Ministry is preparing to work its magic once again within our church walls, helping us internalize the beauty of the Incarnation through the festive and celebratory decorations around us. Yet, it takes many hands to accomplish this and more volunteers are always welcome.

“A lot of times, people remember things when they see something that has caught their attention,” Erin says. “Yet, it is my hope that what the environment ministry contributes to the church will attract at least one parishioner to remember what they have heard during any given Mass.”



*While working together to beautify our place of worship, the Church Environment Ministry also enables parishioners to use their God-given talents for His glory in a way that truly benefits the entire faith community.*

**To learn more about the Church Environment Ministry and how to get involved, please contact either Cynthia Esaki at 808-885-7445 or ministry coordinator Anthony Tanodra at 808-381-3421. To help in Puako, contact Erin Nalani Kaholoa'a via email at [ktohana@gmail.com](mailto:ktohana@gmail.com).**

*A Letter from Our Pastor*

## December: A Time for Mercy and Tenderness

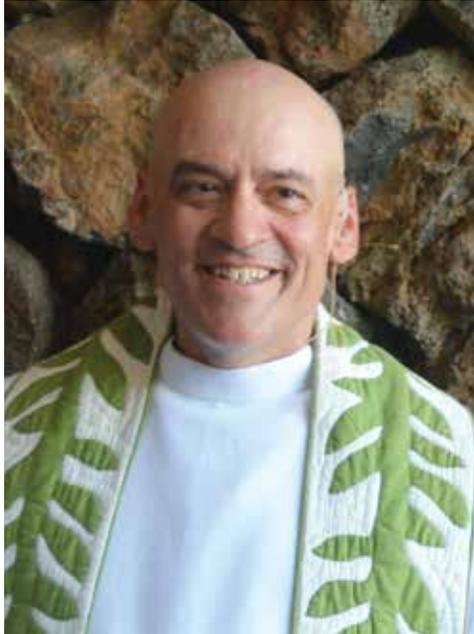
Dear Parishioners,

**A**dvent and Christmas are upon us. This is a busy time for me, for our parish, for priests, and certainly for most of you. We all know that our homes, schools, offices, and churches will soon be overflowing with many holiday events, and our pews will be overflowing with all of those present for Christmas Masses.

We all know why – there is something special about the Church and about our faith during these holidays. First of all, you and I need to remember that fact – and we need to be grateful for it. For those of us who are here every Sunday, this is a time not to resent those who fill our pews and our parking lots. Rather, it is a time to be the loving and welcoming people Christ calls us to be. Hospitality is an important part of being a good steward, and this is a perfect time to practice it.

For those of us who may only come every once in a while, or for these special occasions, you are welcome here! We hope you like what you see, and we want you to know that you always have a home and family here, any time you need it.

You may have heard of the term “the New Evangelization.” It is something Pope Francis has emphasized, in particular through his exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*. The pope’s letter, with the title that means “The Joy of the Gospel,” has



advice for all Catholics relating to how we should all view and treat each other, as sons and daughters of God and members of the Church.

The pope said, “There is a need for Christians who help show God’s mercy and tenderness toward every creature. We all know that today’s humanity is facing a deep crisis. This is why the new evangelization must necessarily use the language of mercy, which is more about gestures and attitudes than words.” Having just celebrated the Year of Mercy in 2016, it is important that we consider the truth expressed in the pope’s words.

This is a time for us to show love for everyone, to our brothers and sisters in the next pew or on the other side of the globe. This is a time to share the Good

News of Emmanuel, God-with-us, with all we meet.

May you and your families have a blessed Advent and Merry Christmas!

Sincerely yours in Christ,

*Fr. Stephen*

Reverend Stephen Macedo  
Pastor





# Passing the Faith on Th



While oftentimes we focus on sharing our time, talent, and treasure, one of the greatest results of stewardship is the relationship formed amongst the community within the parish. Nourished by the fellowship that springs forth from communal living, we are then strengthened to serve as God desires. This is why Annunciation's Young Adult Group aims to create a point of connection for youth and young adults so that they might grow in their faith and stay connected in the parish. While other young adult groups are often limited to those who have graduated from high school, our Young Adult Group plans to extend to those who are in high school as well, embodying our Hawaiian culture in a unique way.

Young Adult Minister Farrah Derla says the parish's goal is to essentially merge the Young Adult Group with the youth group to create a vibrant new ministry.

"We are trying a different format by combining the high school and the young adults — we want them to come together and have the young adults help the younger adults," Farrah says. "We want to see if collaborating between the youth and young adults is more effective with having more ideas and more people involved."

"By involving both high school and young adults, we want the young adults to be models for the youth," Farrah adds. "One of our goals is to provide functions where those involved can have time to bond and reconnect with their parents as well. We want them to know that not only are they learning how to be closer with Jesus, but that parents play a role of support at their home base as they grow in faith."

In our Hawaiian culture, there is a great deal of respect for our elders and for passing on the faith through the family. By providing retreats, workshops, simple classes, and social get-togethers for our youth and young adults, we hope to create a connection across the generations, as our youth mature and grow into adults. In this way, our Young Adult Group demonstrates our Hawaiian culture and truly builds up the Church by connecting all ages found within.

"This ministry is important because the youth are our next generation," Farrah says. "We want to keep the community of the Church going, and for those who are older in the Church, we want them to know that the generations coming after them have a steady foundation and know what is expected of them. We want the youth and young adults to know how to give fully, value life and seek to strengthen their own faith and help others. There are so many youth and young adults who are highly influenced by things of the secular culture that they shouldn't be influenced by — we want to create a safe place, where everybody knows each

# through the Generations

other and knows that there is support so that they are comfortable and more prone to grow as a church and as a community.”

Along with classes and retreats, the Young Adult Group plans to host various recreational events for youth and young adults. Some of these activities will include bowling, beach days and park outings.

“My hope and aspirations for this ministry are that those who are involved grow as individuals no matter where they go from here – that as they go through different stages and are not always at their home church, that they will find their hope and be close to God; that they will find Him even if they are at points where they feel like they can’t see Him,” Farrah says.



## Annunciation Church’s Youth and Young Adults at the Diocesan Youth Day

*Oct. 22, 2016 at St. Ann’s in Kaneohe, Oahu*

We would like to thank our parishioners who were so generous in helping to make this great experience possible. Your contributions were very much appreciated! We would also like to thank our Pastor, Fr. Stephen Macedo who joined us as well as our chaperones:

### Chaperones

Uncle Richard Kaniho  
Aunty Liz Chock  
Aunty Jule Camarillo  
Uncle Larry Denis

Several of our attendees offered their insights on this very special event:

“I gained knowledge on how to live a better life and I learned about our Catholic faith.” – Chris Chock

“I learned that even in your darkest moments, if you believe in and have faith in the Lord, He will guide you back to the light.” – Jackson Cootey

“I enjoyed hearing the many ways that God has touched so many people’s lives. I also appreciated finding new ways to spread God’s love to others through not only words, but through actions.” – Hunter Tripp

“My take out of this trip was that Catholic Christians are as charismatic and joyful as most modern ecumenical churches. That our youth and Parishioners can relate to God in a way that is modern and fun and not deemed as boring. God is alive and well at Annunciation Parish!” – Richard Kaniho (Chaperone)

**Please keep an eye on the bulletin for upcoming events and retreats for the Young Adult Group. If you would like to get involved or have questions or ideas, please contact Farrah Derla at the parish office at 808-887-1220 or by email at [fgbderla@gmail.com](mailto:fgbderla@gmail.com).**



# A Modern Model of Sainthood

## *St. Teresa of Calcutta*

In the dark final years of the Cold War, a small woman — standing at barely five feet tall — offered a living counter-narrative to the inhibiting fear undergirding our daily lives and our foreign affairs. Instead of living in fear, Mother Teresa acted out of love. Instead of withdrawing and isolating herself, she gave tirelessly to others.

Many of us harbor a personal connection to this saint, for we lived during the height of the media coverage of Mother Teresa's work and her friendships with Pope St. John Paul II and the beloved Princess Diana.

Long before she received the name Mother Teresa and the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979, Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu was born on Aug. 26, 1910, in Skopje, Macedonia, the crossroads of the Balkans. The youngest of three children, Mother Teresa was raised predominately by her mother after her father's death, when she was about 8 years old. Dranfile (Drana) Bojaxhiu, Mother Teresa's mother, undoubtedly became a strong influence on her daughter's vocation, since Drana herself was a devout Catholic and known for her prayer life and her charity.

Agnes attended a Catholic primary school and, following the example of her mother, became active in their parish and sang in Sacred Heart's choir. As a young person, Agnes enjoyed reading about the lives of the saints — while immersing herself in the stories of these holy men and women, Agnes first felt the stirring call to become a missionary.

At the age of 18, Agnes traveled to Dublin, Ireland, to join the Sisters of Loreto. She became Sr. Mary Teresa, named after St. Thérèse of Lisieux, and began to learn English. Within a few months of arriving in Ireland, she left for India.

In India, Sr. Mary Teresa lived at the Loreto Entally community in Calcutta, where she served as an educator and taught at St. Mary's School. After her final profession, she became Mother Teresa and, a few years later, began serving as the school's principal.

On an ordinary day, Mother Teresa received an extraordinary call. While on a train ride to her annual retreat, Mother Teresa felt what she would describe as Jesus' thirst for souls. Soon, Jesus called her to found the Missionaries of Charity, an order devoted to serving the "poorest of the poor."

The order formally began on Oct. 7, 1950, and has grown from one woman tending the sick and dying in the streets of Calcutta to over 4,500 religious sisters helping the poor in over 130 countries around the world. Additionally, the order grew to



include the Missionaries of Charity Brothers, the Missionaries of Charity Fathers and the Lay Missionaries of Charity.

Though externally Mother Teresa joyfully and indefatigably served the poor for nearly 50 years, during the majority of this time, she experienced a "dark night of the soul," an extensive period of not feeling God's presence or hearing His voice. Other saints, notably St. John of the Cross, similarly experienced a dark night of the soul. Despite this spiritual struggle, Mother Teresa continued her work joyfully throughout her sickness and until her death on Sept. 5, 1997.

Pope St. John Paul II beatified Mother Teresa in 2003. Fittingly, this year, a pontiff who has underscored the importance of social justice celebrated her canonization. On Sept. 4, 2016, Pope Francis canonized Mother Teresa, the "Saint of the Gutters," at the Vatican.

St. Teresa of Calcutta offers us an example of ceaseless prayer and selfless service. She is a modern model of sainthood that we can emulate in our daily lives starting with how we serve and treat the other members of our family, our faith community and all those with whom we interact on a daily basis.

*St. Teresa of Calcutta, Pray for Us!*

## A Look Back on Our Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

Our First Annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner on Sept. 30 was a huge success. It was held on the church lanai, which was a different setting enjoyed by all. With over 80 people in attendance, everyone who came enjoyed the fabulous dinner made by Janet Lindsey, and her helpers, Dean and Julie Fujitani. The desserts others donated were all delicious! Everyone had fun playing Bingo, and the decorations and favors, along with Matthew Kelly's latest book, were a hit.

We'd like to thank everyone who came, and to our hard working Stewardship Committee Members and Fr. Stephen – *mahalo* for making it a wonderful evening for all in attendance! We hope more of our volunteers will join us next year!





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Annunciation / Ascension Parish  
PO Box 301 Kamuela, HI 96743



## MASS SCHEDULE

### Annunciation – Waimea

Sat., 5 p.m.

Sun., 8 a.m.

### Ascension – Puako

Sun., 10 a.m.

### Waimea Daily Mass:

Tuesday – Friday, 7 a.m. (Chapel)

Noon on First Fridays

**Confessions:** 4 p.m. Saturday or  
by appointment

## Advent and Christmas Schedule 2016

### Thursday, Dec. 8

7 a.m. – Feast of the Immaculate Conception Mass at  
Annunciation Church, Waimea

7 p.m. – Feast of the Immaculate Conception Mass at  
Ascension Mission, Puako

### Saturday, Dec. 24

7 p.m. – Mass, Annunciation Church, Waimea

10 p.m. – Mass, Ascension Mission, Puako

### Sunday, Dec. 25

8 a.m. – Mass, Annunciation Church, Waimea

10 a.m. – Mass, Ascension Mission, Puako



## Don't Forget to Return Your Commitment Card!

The 2016 Stewardship Renewal is ongoing. Please remember to turn in your commitment cards to the parish as soon as possible. We appreciate your willingness to participate in this year's renewal.

The more we grow to embrace and understand the stewardship way of life, the more our parish will flourish and grow!

*Annunciation  
Catholic Church*



*Lift Up Your  
Hearts in Prayer*

2016 Stewardship Renewal  
Commitment Card

First & Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (important) \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_