

ANNUNCIATION & CHURCH ASCENSION MISSION



SHARING CHRISTMAS JOY WITH ANNUNCIATION'S

Giving Tree

It's a feeling we're all familiar with – the hustle and bustle of the holiday season. Whether you're rushing through stores searching for the perfect gift, baking dozens upon dozens of delicious Christmas cookies, or creating an incredible light display in your front yard, it is easy to become busy and forget the true meaning of this holy season.

For those who participate in Annunciation's Giving Tree, it's a chance to step back, slow down and be reminded of what really matters. Each year, during the Christmas season, we celebrate the greatest gift the world has ever known – God's gift of His only Son, born as a baby, a baby who would grow up to save the world. Aware of this immense expression of love, many in our parish chose to respond with generosity for those less fortunate, right here in our community.

This year, our Giving Tree donations will benefit the kupuna living in county housing, designed for seniors. Donations will also be collected for the families of children who participate in our Hunger Free Keiki Ministry, which provides food for homeless children on weekends and school breaks.

"The elderly often get left out – there is assistance for children, single moms, and families, but there are things that [the elderly] also need, that they

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The Giving Tree is an opportunity for parishioners to give to those in our community who are less fortunate.

SHARING CHRISTMAS JOY WITH ANNUNCIATION'S

Giving Tree continued from front cover



Remembering the true meaning of the season, parishioners are encouraged to participate in our annual Giving Tree.

aren't able to purchase with what they have leftover for the month," says Maile Lincoln, a relatively new parishioner and event planner by profession, who recently took over the role of coordinating the Giving Tree at Annunciation.

The Giving Tree will be put up Nov. 25-26, the weekend immediately following Thanksgiving. Parishioners will be encouraged to take home a tag that includes a request for a specific item, such as socks, a coffee mug or gift card, or a child's gender and age, to purchase a gift for them. All unwrapped gifts are due back at the parish the weekend of Dec. 9-10. Parishioners are also encouraged to join the gift-wrapping event, which will take place on Dec. 12, at 5:30 p.m. at the Parish Hall in Waimea.

Members of our Youth Ministry and Religious Education programs will then visit and hand-deliver the gifts to the elderly, bringing Christmas cheer in more ways than one.

"One of the surprising things to me was that a lot of [the elderly] don't have family," Maile says. "One lady mentioned that hardly anyone nearby comes and visits her, so she loves when it's the holidays and people come around, because it's the only time she gets to talk to people. Most of us come from Hawaii where we have big families, that was kind of a turning point for us. [The seniors] really appreciate it and the kids always get a kick out of it.

"It's two-fold," she adds. "It's services they don't get, as well as visitation that they need and they may not be getting."

Maile encourages her fellow parishioners to be generous in getting involved with the Giving Tree this year.

"For us to give back, I think it's great," Maile says. "We hope to bring them a little bit of relief and, most of all, the story of our beliefs and Jesus' birth. We always talk about stewardship, and this is definitely one of the ways we can fulfill our stewardship commitment. Our mission is to make Christmas brighter for other people who don't have it as easy on the holidays."

"I hope parishioners feel in their heart that they participated in something that is going to give someone else a brighter day and they were able to live out being Christ-like," she adds. "I hope everyone's hearts get filled with gratitude."

If you would like more information, or to volunteer for this event, please contact Maile Lincoln at 808-895-3168 or mc2000x3@yahoo.com. Those who would like to become involved, but prefer not to shop, are welcome to make donations by cash or check – made out to "Annunciation Church," memo: "Giving Tree."

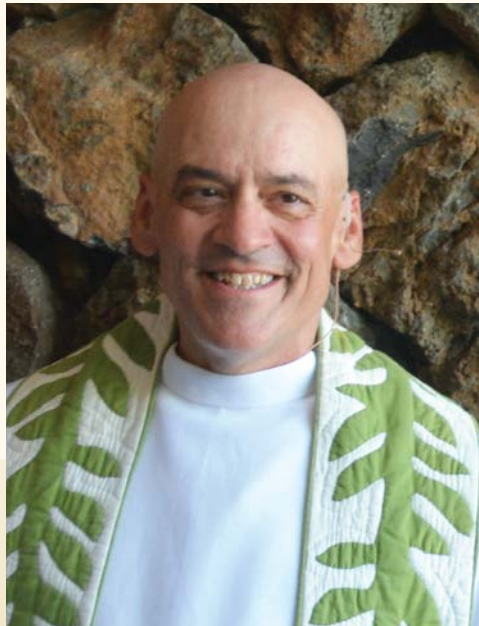
A Letter from Our Pastor

NOVEMBER: *Time to Be Grateful*

Dear Parishioners,

I thank God every day for my priesthood; I thank God every day for each one of you; I thank God when I say the Mass; I thank God for each and every day. There are so many ways that the Lord has blessed me that I cannot really mention them all. That is a lot of gratitude, I know, but it is that kind of attitude of appreciation for God's presence in our lives, and His many gifts to us, that we need to concentrate on — not just this month when Thanksgiving is so much on our minds, but throughout the year. It has been said many times that people who are good stewards are grateful people and, as a result, are happy people. If we think about the good things in our lives — no matter how many challenges and sorrows there may be — and make them the center of our thoughts, it makes everything better.

As Catholics, we are thankful people by nature. We share the Eucharist regularly, and this is a gift from God on which we should always unite. You are probably



aware that the word “Eucharist” itself comes from the Greek word *eucharistia*, which means, quite simply, “thanksgiving.” As a faith family, we share this meal of “thanksgiving” often, and certainly at every Holy Mass.

Thus, my thoughts of thanksgiving are not confined to one time of year, but every day of the year. That should be the goal for each of us. I heard someone say

recently that our Thanksgiving holiday has Protestant roots, but there are Catholic roots to the tradition, as well. Were you aware that in 1565 — 56 years before the Pilgrims celebrated their first Thanksgiving — Spanish Catholic settlers and Native Americans celebrated a Thanksgiving at a Holy Mass in St. Augustine, Fla.?

Thanksgiving is a way of life for us. Every time we gather to celebrate Mass, to pray, or to just enjoy one another's company, it is a time for that eternal gratitude. Everything we have is a gift from God. It may be something basic like fresh air and clean water. It may be food. It is certainly family, friends and our very parish. Let us thank God not just at this time of year, but always. You and I are blessed.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Fr. Stephen

Reverend Stephen Macedo
Pastor

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT *Our*

"I chose to play the violin for the church because of my love for both music and God. I feel proud when I play because I know that people enjoy the sound and I like having a role in the church. Each time I play, I feel that I get more connected to God."

— Jordan Barcenilla, seventh grader
at Waimea Middle School

Our annual Stewardship Renewal is the time when we ask each other to re-prioritize the way we use God's gifts in the Church. Every parish family will receive a "Stewardship Package" in the mail that includes a booklet that describes every ministry in the parish, as well a Commitment Card for you and your family.

I feel like my life is already too full with family obligations and work obligations. I barely even have time to relax. How can I possibly share my time and talents with Annunciation?

We all have many obligations to our families, jobs, schools, and other endeavors. But we also all have the same number of hours in the day with which to accomplish these things. The issue is not how much time we have, but how we prioritize that time.

Before you fill out your Commitment Card, take some time to reflect on your priorities, and where God fits into your day-to-day life. Remember, living as true stewards of God's gifts involves giving back the first fruits of what He has given to us in thanksgiving, not the "leftovers."

I am happy with my current level of parish participation. Why do I need to keep filling out a Commitment Card every year?

As part of the renewal process, it is important that we consider our current level of participation in parish life at Annunciation. Sometimes, the call to stewardship involves the quality of service in addition to its quantity. In looking through the

opportunities for ministry available at the parish, you may find yourself drawn to a new ministry you haven't tried before, or new ways to share your time with God to enrich and enlighten your prayer life. So even though your current level of parish participation might not change drastically, the ways in which you participate may evolve as you grow in living the stewardship way of life.

Even if you end up continuing to participate in the exact same ministries as you have in the past, marking and turning in a Commitment Card means you have reviewed your present ministries and re-committed yourself to them.

I'm not very active in the Church and, frankly, feel like it may be too late to get involved. Why should I fill out a Commitment Card?

It's never too late to renew your faith life, and filling out a Commitment Card is a simple step through which you can immediately re-enter the life of the parish. Our parish community is not here to judge you, but to welcome and nourish you in your faith journey. Begin by checking the box that says, "Attend weekly Mass and Holy Days of Obligation," and take some time to discern additional ways in which God is calling you from that starting point.

"It feels great to help others. Helping in the Food Pantry has given me the opportunity to serve others in need. Everyone there works with love and nothing for return and I'm glad to be a part of it." — Lee Na Beckwith, Waimea

I'm physically unable to attend Mass or be active in parish life at Annunciation. Is there any reason for me to submit a Commitment Card?

Of course! Your prayers are just as important to the success of our parish community in carrying out its mission as ministry participation and financial contributions. Take a moment to

Annual Stewardship Renewal

Time

Spending Time with God in Prayer

Am I using my time on earth wisely, making time for personal prayer, family prayer and quality time with friends and loved ones? Check the circle next to your prayer commitments:

- Attend Mass every Sunday and on Holy Days
- Attend weekday Mass at least once a week
- Spend time in Adoration at least monthly (available each Friday)
- Invite a friend or acquaintance to Mass
- Pray together with my family
- Pray for the sick, the lonely and the deceased
- Discuss our Catholic Faith with my family
- Read the Bible for a half hour a week
- Spend at least 15 minutes a day in personal prayer
- Pray the Rosary at least weekly
- Go to Confession at least every other month
- Spend extra time with my spouse each day

The gift of my time, talent, and treasure is the right size:

- When I can no longer make any excuses for the size of the gift (large or small).
- When I can honestly state that the gift is sacrificial as I offer it in thanksgiving to God.
- When I can honestly state that in the giving of my gift, I am being honest with God and with self.

Talent

Using My Talents in Parish Ministries

Am I using my God-given abilities to strengthen the Church and help others, especially through parish ministries and activities? You can read about our ministries in the Renewal Handbook. When you sign up, the leader will call to explain how to get involved.

Currently Involved Interested in Joining

Clearly write the first name of family member on the line.

HOSPITALITY MINISTRIES

- Aloha Angels
- Aloha Welcome Ministry
- New Parishioner Welcome Ministry (Puako)
- New Parishioner Welcome Ministry (Waimea)
- Ushers (Puako)
- Ushers (Waimea)

PRAYER MINISTRIES

- Altar Servers (Puako)
- Altar Servers (Waimea)
- Catholic Women
- Eucharistic Ministers (Puako)
- Eucharistic Ministers (Waimea)
- Friday Adoration
- Lectors (Puako)
- Lectors (Waimea)

Continued on back panels

Treasure

Making Gift to

In thanksgiving for at Annunciation is percentage of income biblical title:

5% to 10% plus 1% to 4% to 5%

My Offering of Annunciation

Percentage of household income

Please check weekly or monthly gift

Weekly gift \$ _____

OR

Monthly gift \$ _____

Week prep

At Annunciation to work toward the parish. Son reaching this goal your weekly gift amount th

We

% of Household Income	
\$30,000	
\$50,000	
\$70,000	
\$100,000	

“It has been my life long dream to be an altar server. Assisting Fr. Stephen at the altar is like assisting our Heavenly Father above, and doing that gives me great pleasure. I enjoy it tremendously.”

— Flo Figuerres, Puako

Commitment Weekend is **November 18-19**. Please be sure to bring your Commitment Card to Mass!

look over some of the opportunities to spend quiet time with God listed in the “Stewardship of Time” section of the Commitment Card, and take a step towards growing in your relationship with Christ and His Church.

With such a tough economy, I’m reluctant to make a financial pledge for the year, in case my circumstances change and I’m unable to fulfill it. Should I?

Your Commitment Card is not a legally binding contract; it is a pledge of intentions. Make your pledge based on what you are setting out to do to give back to God, and do your best to fulfill that pledge. If your financial circumstances change, your gift will likely change, as well, but it is still important to prioritize God first. Nobody is going to send a bill collector to your house if you can’t fulfill your pledge due to a change in your financial situation! But we’ve all got to start somewhere, and it’s important that we begin our commitment by writing down our goals for giving back of our gifts to God.

I’ve expressed interest in a ministry in the past through filling out a Commitment Card, but nobody from the parish ever followed up with me about it.

While we do our best to consistently follow up with everyone who has shown interest in the opportunities for ministry at Annunciation, we are human, and we sometimes fall short in our follow-up. If this has happened to you in the past, we sincerely apologize, and we encourage you to renew your interest in any activities in which you might like to participate by filling out a Commitment Card this year. Every year, we go into the renewal with every intention of making sure that everyone who has expressed interest is contacted with more information, and we will do so again this year.

“Being new to this parish, volunteering helps me to get to know more people and always fills my heart with gratitude.” — Maile Lincoln, Puako

NEW GREETING CARD MINISTRY IS STEWARDSHIP OF FAITH AND LOVE TOWARD PARISH OHANA

“If I got a card that this person is thinking of me, I’d think, ‘How nice that is.’ I’m sure an ailing person will feel happy that their parish is thinking of them. When someone is ill, I’m sure they still want to have Christ in their life.” – Paula De Silva

Paula De Silva is a behind-the-scenes kind of person. So, when the opportunity to join our new Greeting Card Ministry arose, she was ready to answer the call.

The Greeting Card Ministry was initially formed as a “possible new ministry” during our last Stewardship Renewal Season, and will be included in this year’s renewal materials.

Although it admittedly is off to a slow start, Paula is excited about having this opportunity to show our ailing parishioners that their parish ohana cares about them.

“When I got the annual card for helping out at the church, there was this new item, asking for the Greeting Card Ministry,” Paula says. “I said, ‘This seems cool.’ And I’m kind of a behind-the-scenes person – I don’t like to stand in front. So, I decided I’d do it.”

A number of persons signed up for the ministry, but Paula was the lone member to

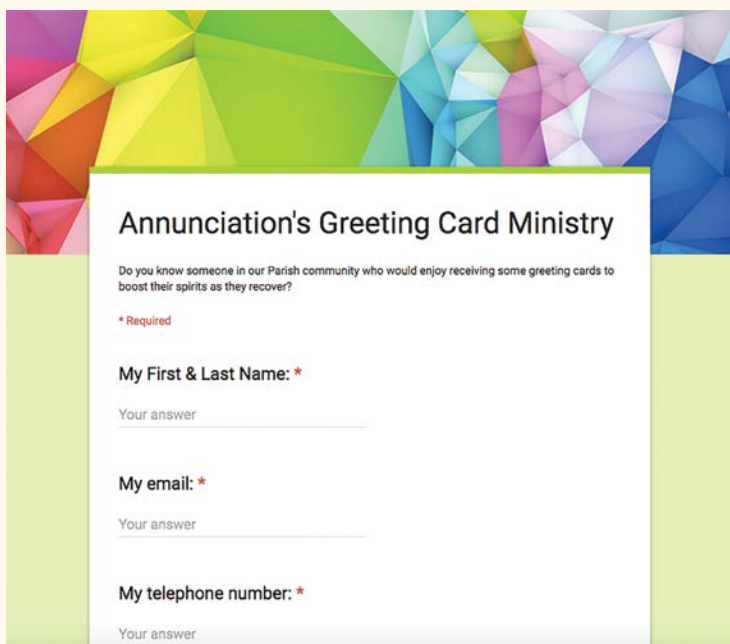
attend the first meeting called by Larry Denis.

“I was so excited when I got the first request to send out a card,” she says. “I wrote a little something from the parish that we are wishing them well, and that they have a speedy recovery.”

The requests for cards are made via a website and then passed along to the ministry members. The members are asked either to make or purchase a card, sign it on behalf of themselves and/or the parish, and place it in the mail.

Paula believes that those receiving the cards will benefit from the care and the continued connection to our parish.

“If I got a card that this person is thinking of me, I’d think, ‘How nice that is,’” Paula says. “I’m sure an ailing person will feel happy that their parish is thinking of them. When someone is ill, I’m sure they still want to have Christ in their life.”



The image shows a screenshot of a web form titled "Annunciation's Greeting Card Ministry". The form has a white background with a colorful geometric pattern in shades of yellow, green, blue, and purple at the top. The text on the form reads: "Do you know someone in our Parish community who would enjoy receiving some greeting cards to boost their spirits as they recover?". Below this is a red asterisk and the word "Required". There are three input fields: "My First & Last Name: *", "My email: *", and "My telephone number: *". Each field has a "Your answer" label and a horizontal line for text entry.

To request a card, please visit: bit.ly/annunciationcardrequest – then, a screen will open with spaces for the intended recipient’s contact information, as well as the requester’s information. A response will be sent to the requester. This response also asks if the Prayer Warrior Ministry may pray for the person.

This request can be made at: www.tinyurl.com/annunciationprayerrequest. Once the renewal season takes place, another meeting of the Greeting Card Ministry will be scheduled. If you would like more information, please contact Paula De Silva at paulakdesilva@gmail.com.

HEAVENLY HOUSEKEEPERS: A “Cleaning Fellowship of Friends”



Dedicated members of our Church Cleaners Ministry – (from left) Irene Clay, Cindy Kennedy, Andrea Costanzo, Gloria Contreras, Florence Figuerres, and Carrie Voss. (Not pictured: Myrna Horn, Joan Walske, Joan Hoffmann, Margorie Carlson, Vicki Aneshansley, Zach Kennedy, Blaise Clay, Devo Voss, Sam Braden, Kevin Hughes, Hope Mathieson, and Karen Anderson)

When parishioner Carrie Voss was first asked to take over the coordination of the Puako Church Cleaners ministry, she accepted the role, thinking this was a good way for her to put her skills as a professional housekeeper to use. Carrie had no idea, however, how much bigger this ministry would become, impacting her life far beyond her simple services.

“Of course, we fill the obvious need of cleaning,” Carrie says. “After all, any space you have needs to be cleaned at some point. But it really has turned more into an opportunity for forming friends and receiving fellowship. We know about each other’s families, we’re there to support one another, and when one of us is struggling, we pull together to see what can be done for that person. It’s grown into a really nice cleaning fellowship of friends.”

Describing it as the “best gig” a housekeeper can have, the Church Cleaners quite literally clean God’s house. Each Saturday, these women gather together at 8:30 a.m. in the Church to vacuum, dust, polish and straighten the pews, altar, sacristy, entrance, and outside of the church.

“When we gather, everyone has their own section that they like to do,” Carrie says. “It’s not burdensome at all. Our members come when they are able and we do laugh a lot. Oftentimes, I’ll be the first person there and I find it very spiritual to go into the church like that when it’s empty.”

“Afterward, we always gather in a circle and pray together, taking turns saying the blessing for that day,” Carrie says. “We thank God for the blessings that He has given us, pray for grace, and then usually go out and have breakfast together. It really has been an enlightening, spiritual and satisfying experience.”

Beyond their Saturday gatherings, Church Cleaners also ensure that the parish bathrooms remain tidy through weekly cleanings. Working in a rotation, volunteers take approximately 20 minutes of their time to clean the bathrooms after the Sunday liturgies. This helps ensure that God’s house remains a pleasant and reverent place of worship – a place worthy of our Heavenly King.

New members are always welcome to this unique fellowship of women. To join the Puako Church Cleaners, please contact Carrie Voss at 808-345-2156. Meanwhile, our Waimea ministry is specifically in need of a new leader who can foster that same “cleaning fellowship of friends” amongst our main parish. If you are interested, please contact the parish office at 808-887-1220.

“When we gather, everyone has their own section that they like to do. It’s not burdensome at all. Our members come when they are able and we do laugh a lot. Oftentimes, I’ll be the first person there and I find it very spiritual to go into the church like that when it’s empty.” – Carrie Voss

Annunciation / Ascension Parish
PO Box 301 Kamuela, HI 96743

Upcoming Events

Thursday, Nov. 23

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

Saturday, Dec. 2

4:30 p.m. – Mass at Annunciation Church, Waimea
Special Mass time due to Christmas Parade.
No confession will be offered.

Friday, Dec. 8

7 a.m. – Immaculate Conception Holy Day Mass at Annunciation Church, Waimea
7 p.m. – Immaculate Conception Holy Day Mass at Ascension Church, Puako

Sunday, Dec. 24

(Regular Sunday Masses in the morning for Sunday Obligation - NOT for Christmas Eve)
7 p.m. – Mass at Annunciation Church, Waimea
10 p.m. – Mass at Ascension Church, Puako

Monday, Dec. 25

8 a.m. – Mass at Annunciation Church, Waimea
10 a.m. – Mass at Ascension Church, Puako

MASS SCHEDULE

Saturday Vigil: 5 p.m. (Waimea) | **Sunday:** 8 a.m. (Waimea) & 10 a.m. (Puako) | **Confession:** Saturday 4 p.m. (Waimea)