

December 23, 2007

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Saint John Vianney

A Mission Church of St. Thomas Aquinas Parish serving you since August 10, 1997
1100 Hood Road, Rio Rancho, NM 87124
www.sjvnm.org

Greetings, friends in Christ.

On this final Sunday of the Advent season I wish you a very happy Christmas. Thus far this Advent has been a blessed Advent. We had a very successful toy drive and toy rapping party two Sundays ago. Thank you who made it possible. The presents--an entire truck load worth--were delivered to Catholic Charities, who will in turn make certain the goods are delivered to the less fortunate.

Last Sunday, our religious education students presented the annual Christmas program, this time singing a very special version of The Twelve Days of Christmas. The performance was fantastic. Thank you students, and thank you teachers.

Friends, you can find the entire Christmas eve and Christmas day schedule of Masses in the bulletin. You will also find the schedule of Masses for the Feast of Mary, the Mother of God, which, like Christmas, is a HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION.

Have a blessed week,

Fr. Scott Mansfield

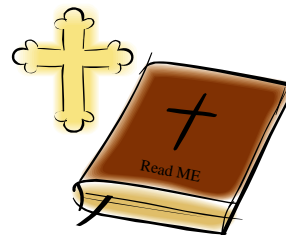
Thank you to all who donated gifts and/or their time to gift bag on December 9th. Donuts were had by all and we had enough gifts to fill the pickup truck! All gifts were donated to Catholic Charities and the left over donuts were given to the Felician Sisters for St. Felix' Pantry.

Holy Rosary

Sunday7:40AM
Sunday10:40AM

Holy Mass

Sunday8:00AM
Sunday11:00AM



Defending Our Faith – A Series on Apologetics by John Lombardo

Birth Control and Natural Family Planning

John and Grace have four children and have determined that they can't adequately provide for more children at the present time. As good Christians, they know artificial birth control is morally wrong. In their discussion with Father Scott, he recommends they use Natural Family Planning and to take a class at St. Thomas Aquinas. Unfortunately, John and Grace don't understand why NFP is okay if birth control is sinful. Aren't they the same, they ask?(1)

There is a great deal of confusion over what NFP is and is not. NFP refers to the practice of achieving or avoiding pregnancies according to an informed awareness of a woman's fertility. NFP is completely natural using no drugs, devices or surgery. In a word, it is extremely cheaper than birth control devices.(2)

NFP is not the antiquated and often ineffective rhythm method which was based on calendar calculations of a "normal" cycle. NFP in contrast, contends that every woman is irregular at least some of the time. NFP is internationally known, practical and extremely effective. "Those who apply the guidelines conscientiously can achieve a 98.6-99 percent effectiveness rate to avoid pregnancy." (3)

Morally, what makes NFP acceptable while artificial birth control is wrong?

1. NFP doesn't separate sex from responsibility. We noted last week that every marital act must be "open" to the possibility of life, as long as the spouses do nothing to close it. This is the difference between NFP and artificial birth control. When one does something (takes a pill, uses a condom, etc.) this is a deliberate act of "closing" the life-giving power of sexual intercourse. If there is a serious reason to avoid pregnancy the couple choose not to do the action in the first place. NFP, simply put, recognizes and charts the easily observable signs of fertility exhibited by the wife's body.(4)

2. NFP is based on Virtue, I.E. an act of love. In effect each tells the other "I did not marry you just for sexual pleasure but because I love you. You are a person not an object." Using NFP, which requires abstinence from intercourse, can actually strengthen the marriage: trust is increased; each avoids treating the other as a sex object; pleasure alone is not the dominant object of marriage, but virtue is.(5)

3. NFP places family planning squarely on the shoulders of both partners since it requires communication and cooperation. Both spouses have to decide whether to try to avoid or achieve pregnancy. This communication and cooperation needed in NFP actually increases the love and respect between the spouses. Knowing with certainty at what stage of the cycle one is in, the spouses can ignore any worries about contraceptive failure or pill side effects.(6)

4. NFP is not just a means to avoid pregnancy as artificial contraception is. It can be used to achieve pregnancy since it pinpoints ovulation. NFP is therefore a positive approach to the sexual life of the spouses.(7)

Can NFP be misused? It can if the couple has the wrong motives. If a couple decide that "we just don't want children at this time" for any selfish reason, the act then becomes "child avoidance."

... Continued on next page

Continued from previous page

We noted in the beginning of this monograph that there had to be an objective, serious reason to use NFP such as health reasons or financial problems. It should be a priority that a couple discuss the use of NFP with their parish priest. He can help the couple determine their acceptance of God’s plan for them concerning love and marriage.

To learn more about this subject and to obtain written material about NFP, write to:

The Couple-to-Couple League
P.O. Box 111184 , Cincinnati, OH (513)-661-7612

I offer you Verse 14 of St. Pio’s Communion prayer: “Stay with me Jesus. I do not ask for divine consolations because I do not deserve them, but I only ask for the gift of Your Presence. Oh yes! I ask this of You!”

PEACE....I wish each one of you, parishioners of St. John Vianney Mission Parish, a most blessed and Christ-filled Christmas - and thank you, Fr. Scott, for allowing me the opportunity to share our Faith with our Parish.

I pray God provides each one of us His abundant graces to grow in our faith. Let us all work towards building up the Church in Rio Rancho, not just in bricks and mortar, but in knowing our Faith and spreading it to all with whom we come in contact. And thank you, Carl Beyer, for your hard work in publishing our Bulletin. Merry Christmas, every one!

- (1) www.priestsforlife.org/article/nfpdifferences
- (2) www.nfpoutreach.org
- (3) ibid
- (4) www.priestsforlife.org/articles/nfpdifferences
- (5) ibid
- (6) ibid
- (7) ibid

The King is Born

Parish Directory

Vicar.....	Rev. Scott Mansfield
Coordinator	Ed Uhrich
Communications	Carl E. Beyer
Finance Building Chair	James Sandoval
Pastoral Chair	Ed Uhrich
Head Sacristan	Gerry Hoover
Head Usher & Altar Servers	Ed Uhrich
Head Lector.....	Peggy Riley
Head EM.....	Pinky Bjornstad
Head CCD.....	Edwinna Herrera
Head Snacker	Harlan Harrington
Closet Santa Helper	Tony Quinones

Thank you for reading our bulletin. Any suggestions, comments or articles can be sent to bulletin@sjvnm.org. We also like to hear about births, baptisms, marriages or other news about our church members. Please visit our website at www.sjvnm.org and click on **Subscribe** to be added to the eMailing list.

Volunteer Schedule	December 23, 2007		December 30, 2007	
	8:00AM	11:00AM	8:00AM	11:00AM
Ushers	Karl Lucero James Dory	Phil Griego Carl Beyer	Tom Anderson John Christensen	Ed Uhrich James Sandoval
EM of Holy Communion	Julie Burnside	Pinky Bjornstad	Harlan Harrington	Anna Marie
Rosary Leader	Catherine Uhrich	Rochelle Quinones	Fred Bates	Pinky Bjornstad
Altar Servers	Sergio Guillen Amanda Vigil	Jaeson Chavez Jordan Juarez	Peter Lucero Ian Burnside	Nick Tafuro Matthew Sandoval
Readers	David Crawford Julie Burnside	Peggy Riley	David Crawford Peggy Riley	Vicky Howell Lillian Ortiz

Volunteer Schedule	December 24, 2007	December 25, 2007
	7:00PM	11:00AM
Ushers	Ed Uhrich Tom Anderson	Tony Quinones Karl Lucero
EM of Holy Communion	Harlan Harrington	Margaret Chavez
Rosary Leader	Pinky Bjornstad	Rochelle Quinones
Altar Servers	Peter Lucero Charles Lucero	Steven Chavez Tabetha Chavez
Readers	Lillian Ortiz Julie Burnside	April McClellan Jose Guillen

Join us for **Jesus** Birthday.

Ever wonder why those who oppose Christians still join in the celebration of his Birthday. Our **Lord** is such a gracious host.

What **BAD** Guest they are to our **Lord's** Party.

Ad \$ Raised for the Building Fund \$475	<p>For information on advertising eMail ads@sjvnm.org.</p>
 <p><i>Sin Cera</i> <i>Homestaging and design among friends</i> <i>Joanna and Greer: 897-2169</i> <i>sincera.staging@ hotmail.com</i></p>	
<p>Support our advertisers and give them a call</p>	<p>New Mexico Net Your NM information resource www.nmnet.org</p>
<p>Rio Rancho Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery Laurence J. Rogel, D.D.S., P.C. Providing oral surgical care for N.M since 1984 994-4772 - www.rioranchooms.com</p>	<p>All proceeds from advertising goes toward the building fund.</p>