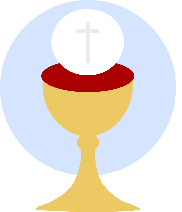
**CHAPEL HAPPENINGS**

**November 5, 2021**

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**Catholic Mass begins**

**Saturday, November 6, 5 pm**

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**Communion Sunday**

**November 7, 9:30 am**

**(Eastern Standard Time – turn back clocks!)**

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**Rehearsals start Thursday, November 11,**

**3pm in the Chapel Sanctuary.**

**All welcome to join!**

**WHITE DOVE TREE IN CHAPEL LOBBY**

**Choose a dove Sundays – 9-11 am and Fridays – 1-4 pm**

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The Doves are numbered. Your name and the child’s name must be recorded by the committee before taking. Help make a child’s Christmas extra-special this year.

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**Jim Baranello Memorial Service –** Saturday, 11/6, 11am

**Peg McCain Memorial Service –** Sunday, 11/14, 3 pm

**\*Take Note - Veterans Luncheon canceled\***

As the response to this event was not as robust as in prior years, we have had to cancel it for this year. We look forward to a more successful turnout in the future.

**A Message from our Chaplain…**

Last Sunday was special because it was Friendship Sunday. We hoped to create an opportunity for the many new people at Mariner Sands to meet people and start a friendship by inviting them to join us as we sing and worship. I mentioned three requests for all of us to consider: make a friend, be a friend, and help a friend. The Bible text we read was from the prophet Isaiah and the letter from James. In both passages, the Bible mentions Abraham. You can read his life in Genesis 12-through 25. He was a godly man. He trusted God in every circumstance in his life. He was the father of Israel, and a spiritual pioneer for three faiths: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. In Genesis 25, the Bible says that after 175 years, “Abraham breathed his last and died at a ripe old age, an old man and satisfied with life.” (NASB) Isaiah says Abraham was a friend of God. A thousand years later, James reminds us again that Abraham “was called God’s Friend.” Another key figure in Biblical history was Moses. We read in Exodus 33:11 that God spoke to Moses face to face, “as one speaks to a friend.”

In our Gospel reading, Jesus implored the disciples, commanding them, to re-frame the relationship; love each other as Jesus had loved them. He calls them **friends**. That is the label He uses. The old label of “servant’ hit an expiration date. Jesus said a servant does not know the master’s business, but friends of the master do. And he adds one condition to this: you are God’s friend if you do what he commands you to do.

So today, let's underscore the reason we regularly come together. It is not about religion or regulations; it is because we have found God to be our friend. What better friend could you have? Both Isaiah and John carefully affirm that all this was initiated by God. We really had nothing to do with it. God found us; He chose us. By faith, we took that offer of His friendship. And in a moment, we became a friend of God, just as Abraham, Moses, the disciples, and every other follower of God. You are invited to be His friend if you will simply believe and decide on that genuine offer.

Everyone is invited here because God wants to make friends and welcome them into His family. Then, as true friendship can stand the test of time, God has given us His abiding presence to strengthen us for every circumstance in life, and to be our everlasting friend. And finally, whenever we need Him most, He is there to help. All we must do is ask. In Proverbs 17, we find this very wise saying, “A friend loves at all times.” The most famous verse from John’s gospel makes more sense now: “God so loved the world (*AT ALL TIMES*) that He gave His only begotten Son *(The Greatest Helper we could ever imagine*), that whosoever believes in Him (*the simplest task of friendship*), would not perish but have everlasting life.” (*The kind of help that we could never achieve by our own effort.*) And if you are a faithful follower of God, today make a friend, be a friend, and help a friend. AMEN.

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