

ORANGE DIOCESAN COUNCIL OF

**CATHOLIC WOMEN**

# fragments

DECEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER

## ODCCW Mission Statement

*To promote among our Catholic women a greater devotion to Christ and the Church,  
as we share the Blessed Mother's role of bringing others to Christ  
through spirituality, leadership, and service.*



*The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you  
good news of great joy that will be for all the people.  
For today in the city of David a savior has been born  
for you who is Messiah and Lord."*

Luke 2:10-11

## HOLY READINESS

### CAROL PALMER

### ODCCW PRESIDENT-ELECT

Dear Sisters,

Advent is a time to prepare for the coming of Our Lord. I admit, I often find myself trying to do too much and not doing anything well. There is the shopping and wrapping, decorating and baking, as well as the advent reading and reflecting that I want to do.

In his letter to NCCW, Fr. Thomas Washburn, Chair of Spiritual Advisors, spoke of Holy Readiness. He says that Holy Readiness doesn't mean that we need to have everything done perfectly, just that we need to be awake to the ordinary moments in our days. He reminds us that, "God shows up in unexpected ways and at unexpected times. The Lord comes quietly, humbly, and often without fanfare. Holy Readiness means that we are willing to slow down enough to notice grace arriving in small moments and simple gestures. The world says, Hurry up. Our faith says, Stay awake."

Fr. Tom has given me much to think about as I rush around trying to do it all. I plan to downsize my expectations for myself and spend more time in prayer and reflection. I vow to use only one of the many advent companion books that I have instead of trying to use them all!

In a world that often feels dark, we celebrate the Light that no darkness can overcome. May we continue to be a reflection of that light to one another and our community. Merry Christmas to my sisters in Christ! I pray as we conclude this Jubilee Year of Hope, that you are filled with the love of God, the hope of Jesus and the peace of the Holy Spirit.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Orange Diocesan Council of Catholic Women, pray for us!

Yours in Christ,  
Carol



## SEMINARIAN FRANCIS ANG

This year ODCCW adopted a seminarian named **Francis Ang**, to help with his expenses. On December 6, 2025, Francis became a Deacon. From September through November 2025, we gifted Francis \$400.00 from your generous donations. A check was presented to Francis at his diaconate ordination. Below is more information about Francis.



**Formation Stage** - Deacon

**Home Parish** - St. Boniface, Anaheim

**Seminary** - St. John's Seminary

**Favorite Saint(s)** - St. Augustine of Hippo, St. Francis of Assisi, St.

Teresa of Calcutta, St. Therese of Lisieux, St. Michael the Archangel, St. Catherine of Siena

**Favorite Marian Apparition(s)** -

Our Lady of Guadalupe, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Our Lady of Lourdes

**Favorite Book or Movie** - The Bible, White Chicks (movie)

**Favorite Hobby** = Hanging out with my friends, Going to sporting events, and concerts, Reading, Sleeping

**What are some of the factors that led to your decision to enter the seminary and discern the question of a vocation to the priesthood?**

- Experiencing priests that were positive role models to me.

- Altar-serving since the 5th grade, falling in love with liturgy.

- Traveling the world and seeing the beauty of the Catholic faith and the universality of the Church.

- Working as a RN at St. Mary Medical Center, caring for the sick, seeing the priests minister to the sick and dying, and accompanying those until death.

**Who are some of the people who influenced your decision to enter the seminary? What is it about them that assisted you?**

My pastor at the time, now Bishop Freyer, had a significant influence on my decision to enter the seminary and discern a vocation to the priesthood. He lives out his priesthood with great joy, authenticity, and love.

Describe the moment that you knew you wanted to take the next steps to become a priest?

Spending more time spent in Eucharistic Adoration, surrendering to the loving embrace of Christ. Experiencing his love and mercy through the Sacrament of Reconciliation more often. Being reassured by the intercession of our Blessed Mother in the Rosary.

## JANUARY GENERAL GATHERING



### ALL ARE INVITED Fr. Chris Heath

**What's a nice priest like me doing in a place like Archives?**

The surprising connections between my personal story and the Diocese of Orange.

Join us as Fr. Chris shares, through photographs and his quick wit, ties in diocesan history, his family story, and his vocation, as well as an explanation of the archives department. This faith filled and fun event is not to be missed!

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Irvine  
Tuesday, January 20, 2026  
10:00 am (check in 9:45)  
12:00 pm Lunch

**RSVP by January 16.** Mail checks payable to ODCCW  
c/o Susan Navarrete, 14245 Utrillo Dr., Irvine, CA 92606  
or contact Susan at 949-345-9130  
or by email at [snavarrete150@gmail.com](mailto:snavarrete150@gmail.com)



By Dr. Ida Pennella, PhD  
Emeritus Advisor

As a little girl raised in the 40s and 50s, fond memories fill my mind as I think back to a time growing up in a French-Canadian community in Manchester, NH. We lived four houses from my Mémère and Peper's house. Since St. Patrick's church and school was across the street from them, I walked to school.



The start of Advent was an anticipated event at Mémère house, because after dinner, the youngest child in the family, me, lit the simple wreath, just four candles on a makeshift stand with some evergreen branches. This was a time to show Jesus we loved Him. Similar to Lent, the kids gave up candy.

Christmas Eve was the big event, Jesus was born! As I looked out the window, bundled in my snowsuit, getting ready to walk to Midnight Mass, I exclaimed, "Mommy, it's snowing". Everyone was excited.

After Mass, we walked back to Mémère's house, and as we entered the parlor, I was excited to see the Christmas tree aglow with flickering bubble-lights. Santa had delivered the gifts while we were at church, and baby Jesus was laying in the manger. From the kitchen the aroma of freshly baked tourtière\* with cinnamon and cloves was ready to eat at 1:30 AM.

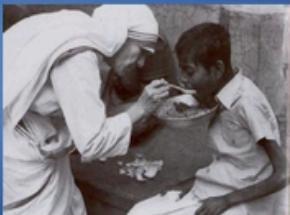
As we reflect today on this Holy Season of Advent, it doesn't end until December 24. With that in mind, there's still time to prepare for the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Let us consider the scriptures and practical applications of being Jesus' hands and feet to others.

*"Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God." (Hebrews 13:16 ESV)*

Consider doing the **Corporal Works of Mercy** during Advent.  
They provide for the needs of the body.

### The 7 **Corporal** Works of Mercy

- To feed the hungry
- To give drink to the thirsty
- To clothe the naked
- To shelter the homeless
- To visit the sick
- To visit the imprisoned
- To bury the dead



Prayer and almsgiving are still rightly associated with Christmas, the season of giving. But fasting in the month of December, as fasting-for-advent/the sermons of Pope Leo the Great (reigned 440-461) show, is a practice once encouraged of the faithful. Source: <https://www.thecatholicthing.org/2014/11/30/>

\*A **tourtière** is a meat pie originating from Quebec, usually made with half ground pork and half ground beef. It is a traditional part of the Christmas and/or Christmas Eve **réveillon** and New Year's Eve meal in Quebec, but is also enjoyed and sold in grocery stores all year long. This kind of pie is known as *pâté à la viande* (literally, meat pie) in the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region. Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tourti%C3%A8re>

## BOX OF JOY



You Have Helped Give Joy and Deliver

**781,730 Box of Joy Gifts to  
Children Around the World!**

[YOUR IMPACT](#)

"Boxes of Joy" ODCCW Project results:

The women of ODCCW are excited to announce that we promised to contribute fifty (50) "Boxes of Joy" and instead we surpassed that goal by delivering seventy-four (74) "Boxes of Joy!"

Our group of women are so generous and kind participating with such passion and commitment so that they can make a difference for underprivileged children and their families. We pray the children receiving these gifts will feel loved and comforted this Christmas Season knowing that someone from another part of the world cares for them.

The gifts will be going to Guatemala and other South American countries. We praise Jesus for the opportunity to touch their lives, and we hope our actions will have a lasting impact!

Blessings,  
Nancy Castenholz



## December Facts

By Dr. Ida Pennella, PhD

The name December originates from the Latin word decem, meaning ten.

This is because, in the early Roman calendar, which started in March, December was indeed the tenth month of the year.

**SILENT NIGHT:** In 1818 at St. Nicholas Church in Oberndorf, Austria, a 31-year-old teacher and organist Franz Gruber composed a melody on a guitar for a poem written by 26-year-old Josef Mohr, entitled "Stille Nacht." That evening Silent Night was sung for the first time. Source: WISR 680AM News Sheet, December 24, 2002. WISR, A Butler County PA Radio Network Station [www.wisr680.com](http://www.wisr680.com)

HELLO WINTER SOLSTICE!

December 21st

the shortest day  
& the longest night  
of the year.

Merry Christmas  
Happy Hanukkah

6th December  
St. Nicholas Day

The actual Saint Nicolas was a man born in Turkey during the Roman Empire

If you don't know who St Nicolas is, you'll more than likely still know of his American version Santa Claus, or the British version of Father Christmas. These give their presents on Christmas Day, but this saint gives his out on the 6th.

[https://www.ronaldotheflyingreindeer.com](http://www.ronaldotheflyingreindeer.com)

Walt Disney was born on Dec. 5, 1909.

Founded Disneyland in Anaheim, CA and Disney World in Orlando, FL.

Alfred Nobel of the famed "Nobel Prize" invented dynamite.

Died on Dec. 10, 1896.

## Christmas Symbols

The Tree...  
points to heaven and reminds us that God is eternal.

The Wreath ...  
is a circle reminding us that God's love for us never ends.

The Candle ...  
shines brightly, showing us that Jesus is the light of the world.

PRESIDENTS BORN IN DECEMBER

DOB	NAME	POTUS
Dec. 5, 1782	Martin Van Buren	8th President
Dec. 29, 1808	Andrew Johnson	17th President
Dec. 28, 1856	Woodrow Wilson	28th President

Bill of Rights signed on  
Dec. 15, 1791



Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America (SBA Pro-Life America), SBA Pro-Life America and its affiliated super PAC (Women Speak Out PAC) plan to spend \$80 million to elect anti-abortion candidates in the 2026 midterm elections.

**Goal:** Retain pro-life majorities in the U.S. House and Senate.

**Target Audience:** The campaign will target 10.5 million pro-life voters through canvassing, digital advertising, and voter contact mail.

**Key Battleground States:** The effort will focus on states including Iowa, Georgia, Michigan, and North Carolina, which feature key Senate and House races.

**Methods:** The plan includes 4.5 million home visits and deploying student volunteer teams to competitive House districts.

More information is available on the [Susan B. Anthony Pro-Life America website](#).



## Arkansas Named Most Pro-Life State in America for Sixth Year in a Row

Newsroom Oct 27, 2025

**LITTLE ROCK, Ark.** – On Monday, Governor Sarah Huckabee Sanders joined Americans United for Life and the Arkansas Family Council to announce that Arkansas ranked the most pro-life state in America for the sixth year in a row, according to annual rankings released by Americans United for Life. The pro-life organization ranks all 50 states based on state laws that protect the unborn, the elderly, the disabled, and the terminally ill.

"Pro-life is whole life, and I'm proud that for the past six years, Arkansas has ranked number one in the nation – not just in protecting the unborn, but in preserving life from conception to natural conclusion," **said Governor Sanders**. "I'm thankful to the activists who have fought for this day for decades and promise that as governor, I will continue to fight every day to protect the most vulnerable among us."

"Today, Americans United for Life recognized the many pro-life laws and policies our state has enacted over the years. Arkansans should be proud of their state legislators for passing the best laws in the nation when it comes to protecting unborn children, the elderly, the disabled, and the terminally ill."

"That's something to celebrate," **said Arkansas Family Council President Jerry Cox**. Since the 1973 Roe v. Wade decision, Arkansas has passed more than 65 laws to protect the dignity of human life, including prohibiting abortion except to save the mother's life in 2021 – a law that became effective when the U.S. Supreme Court overturned Roe through the Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Center decision in 2022.

Read more at <https://governor.arkansas.gov/>

**NOTE:** The NCCW Legislative Advocacy Committee is under the Spirituality Commission and is guided by Catholic Social Teaching for legislation on: 1) **Abortion:** opposes abortion and infanticide, includes ProLife issues, 2) **Human rights:** Includes human dignity, domestic violence, human trafficking and opposition to genocide, 3) **Women's health:** screening for osteoporosis and routine health care, and 4) **Equal opportunities:** minimum wage, social security, and health insurance.

## POPE LEO XIV ON SUICIDE PREVENTION

**Dr. Ida Pennella, PhD**  
**ODCCW Emeritus Advisor**

### POPE'S PRAYER INTENTION FOR NOVEMBER: SUICIDE PREVENTION

Following Shayla Patron's talk on Suicide Prevention on November 18, I found it interesting to view several articles on Pope Leo XIV dedicating his November 2025 monthly prayer intention to the prevention of suicide. One of the articles was by Deborah Castellano Lubov of the Vatican News and another generated on the web by Al.

The Pope called "for prayer, community support, and the use of professional mental health resources for those struggling with suicidal thoughts ... [and] for communities to offer support, care, and love to those struggling with suicidal thoughts."

He stressed the "importance of professional help", and stated that "the Church does not replace healthcare professionals and encouraged seeking necessary professional help, such as from psychologists, doctors, and therapists" and that "the general practice of the Church today is to treat those who have died by suicide very respectfully, acknowledging the role of mental health issues and the complexities involved."

His core message "is the need for people to rediscover that life is a gift and that meaning and beauty can persist even amidst pain and suffering" and concluded, "that all people, including believers, are vulnerable to sadness and hopelessness."





## PRAY FOR PRIESTS CALENDAR

1-1	Joseph	Truong	St. Barbara Church	730 S Euclid St, Santa Ana, CA 92704
1-2	Quyen	Truong	St. John Neumann	5101 Alton Parkway, Irvine, CA 92604
1-3	Bala	Udumala	St. Hedwig Church	11482 Los Alamitos Blvd., Los Alamitos, CA 90720
1-4	Msgr. John	Urell	c/o St. Timothy	29102 Crown Valley Pkwy, Laguna Niguel, CA 92677
1-5	Bishop Kevin	Vann	Bishops Office	13280 Chapman Ave, Garden Grove, CA 92840
1-6	Leonel Mauricio	Vargas Morales	St. Anthony Claret	1450 La Palma Avenue, Anaheim, CA 92805
1-7	Eric	Viray	St. Pius V Church	7691 Orangethorpe Ave, Buena Park, CA 90621
1-8	Armando	Virrey	Immaculate Heart of Mary	1100 S Center St., Santa Ana, CA 92704
1-9	Anthony	Vu	Blessed Sacrament Church	14072 Olive Street, Westminster, CA 92683
1-10	Martin	Vu	St. Joseph, Plac.	717 N Bradford Ave, Placentia, CA 92870
1-11	Paul Hoa	Vu	St. Barbara Church	730 S Euclid St, Santa Ana, CA 92704
1-12	David	Vuelvas	c/o Ministry to Priests Office	13280 Chapman Ave., Garden Grove, CA 92840
1-13	Gregory	Walgenbach	Pastoral Center	13280 Chapman Ave, Garden Grove, CA 92840
1-14	John	Weling	c/o Ministry to Priests Office	13280 Chapman Ave., Garden Grove, CA 92840
1-15	Frank	Wilder	Our Lady of Pillar Church	1622 W 6th St, Santa Ana, CA 92703
1-16	Benedict	Yang	Korean Martyrs Catholic Center	7655 Trask Ave, Westminster, CA 92683
1-17	Douglas	Zavala	Blessed Sacrament Church	14072 Olive Street, Westminster, CA 92683
1-18	Msgr. Stephen	Doktorzyk	c/o Ministry to Priests Office	13280 Chapman Ave., Garden Grove, CA 92840
1-19	Bony	Arackal	St. Martin de Porres	19767 Yorba Linda Blvd, Yorba Linda, CA 92886
1-20	Francis	Gloudeman	St. Martin de Porres	19767 Yorba Linda Blvd, Yorba Linda, CA 92886
1-21	Isabelo	Abuan, III, A.M.	Alagad ni Maria	1235 S. Magnolia Ave, Anaheim, CA 92804
1-22	Wayne	Adajar	St. Pius V Church	7691 Orangethorpe Ave, Buena Park, CA 90621
1-23	Saul	Alba-Infante	St. Bonaventure	16400 Springdale St., HB, CA 92649
1-24	Rudy	Aluman	Blessed Sacrament	14072 Olive Street, Westminster, CA 92683
1-25	Ven	Amidar	c/o Ministry to Priest's Office	13280 Chapman Ave, Garden Grove, CA 92840
1-26	Francis	Ang	Pastoral Center	13280 Chapman Ave, Garden Grove, CA 92840
1-27	Romeo	Ascan, A.M.	St. Irenaeus Church	5201 Evergreen Ave, Cypress, CA 90630
1-28	Gabriel	Atidoo	Our Lady of Mount Carmel	1441 W Balboa Blvd, Newport Beach, CA 92661
1-29	Glenn	Baaten	St. John Henry Newman Church	2532 Dupont Drive, Irvine, CA 92612
1-30	Al	Baca	St. Anne Church-SB	340 10th St, Seal Beach, CA 90740
1-31	Msgr. Lawrence	Baird, P.A.	St. John Vianney Chapel	314 Marine Ave. Balboa Island, CA 92662