



From the Desk of Fr. Leo

One of the great revolutions of the modern world was the emancipation of women. Admittedly, it hasn't still achieved complete equality between the sexes. Women's rights are better recognized in the statute books than in reality. But there has been extraordinary progress in a relatively short period. Women were only given the vote in England in 1918. I am always taken aback when discussing this subject to find that it invariably adds to a vigorous attack on the church. It is argued that the reason women were so long deprived of their human rights was largely the fault of the church. For almost two-thousand years the church has relegated women to secondary citizenship. There are undoubtedly strong arguments in favor of that view. A couple of years ago, the Pope apologized to women for the church's attitude towards them in the past. But there is still no place for women in the hierarchical structure of the church. Its structures are made and look like remaining that way. Its laws were designed by males, and celibates at that. Its theology has been at least until very recently an exclusively male domaine. Women were consigned to the home, or in the case of the chosen few, the convent.



Yet if one takes a more global view of women, it is remarkable that the liberation movement has only taken off in what used to be termed "the Christian West" that is, in Europe and North America, whose philosophy and values are largely derived from Christianity. Their sisters in the Muslim world, if recent reports be true, are almost going in reverse with the re imposition of the "chaddor" veiling all but their eyes and this even in countries as westernized as Algeria. Things are little better in Buddhist and Hindu countries yet women are still assigned inferior roles in society. Probing a little deeper into why women's emancipation is confined almost exclusively to the



Christian world, I would argue – though sometimes I seem to be in a minority of

one – that is due to the remarkable position Mary holds in the Catholic tradition. Admittedly nowadays, she doesn't get as often a good press.

But this is all a recent aberration. Look at the great Renaissance artists which Italy also produced and their depictions of Mary in all the glory of her womanhood. You can easily recognize here the person who was the subject of that marvelous compliment paid to Christ in the Gospel: "Blessed is the womb that bore thee and the paps that gave thee suck." And I suspect that this more authentic view of Mary has made a deeper impact on the popular imagination.

The authentic gospel image of Mary has exercised an enormous influence on the religious imagination of Christians for almost two-thousand years. And it still continues. Recent research on young Catholics in America shows Mary to be their most powerful religious image. It would be strange indeed, if she, whose very first recorded concern was for another woman, had not contributed to the emancipation of her sex.

Fr. Leo Alban Asuncion

Sunday Collection -December 14th

Table with 2 columns: Item and Amount. Rows include St. Rose, Crockett (\$1193), Flowers/Decorations (\$821), St. Patrick Mission (\$N/A), and Bishops Appeal (\$N/A).

Thank you again to all who support our Parish! We know how generous you have been in the changing times!

***In able to meet our 2025 budgets, we would like to remind parishioners that we will need a minimum of \$2,100 for Sunday plate collections at St. Rose every weekend, and \$250 every Sunday at St. Patrick Mission. **

Office Hours

The office will be closed Wednesday, December 24-Thursday, January 1st. It will re-open Monday, January 5th.

Mass Intentions for the Week

Table of Mass Intentions for the week of Dec 23-28. Includes days, dates, times, and names of those for whom Mass is said.

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Poinsettias & Christmas Decorations

The poinsettias that decorate our Church during the Christmas season are in honor of our departed loved ones. Envelopes to add the memory of your loved one to the altar are in the vestibule. The donation for each name is \$10. Last day to turn them in is Monday, December 22nd.

Prayers for the Deceased

In your prayers, please remember in a special way Diane (Bottini) Thomas. A memorial mass will be held here, at St. Rose, on Thursday, January 15th at 9:00AM.



The toys at the Christmas Eve Children's Mass have become a tradition with Father Leo. He is hoping that parishioners might be willing to donate a few small toys for the children who attend the Children's Mass to receive. Please let the office know if you would like to participate, 510-787-2052.

Just a reminder of the changes in the Mass schedule for the week of New Years:

SOLEMNITY OF MARY MOTHER OF GOD (New Year)

4:30 P.M. Vigil Mass –St. Rose of Lima, Wednesday, December 31, 2025

9:00 A.M. – New Year's Day Mass St. Rose of Lima, Thursday, January 1, 2026

There will be no 11:00AM Mass on either of those days.

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