



St James Episcopal Cathedral

www.stjamesfresno.org

NEWSLETTER

November 2018

A LETTER TO THE SAINT JAMES CATHEDRAL FAMILY

November 1, 2018

The Feast of All Saints' Day

Dear Cathedral Family of St. James,

It is a blessing and an honor to write my first correspondence to the Cathedral congregation.

First and foremost, Erin, Lexie, and I are enthusiastically counting down the days until December 1st. Our journey from Hawai'i to Fresno later this month will be a California homecoming. We are looking forward to our new spiritual home and community of faith, to new friends and colleagues, to our new house and city, to new opportunities and challenges, and to sharing God's love, grace, and joy with everyone we meet.

This past spring, as I sat in an airport lounge waiting for my flight to Spain for my pilgrimage along the Camino de Santiago (The Way of St. James), I learned of the Dean's position. My Camino to St. James began in the tiny French village of Saint Jean Pied-de-Port, and I thought my pilgrimage was to end in Santiago de Compostela—the final resting place of Saint James. However, the Holy Spirit had a different “St. James” in mind for me . . . in Fresno, California. My Camino has just begun, and I feel so blessed to be a pilgrim with you on this journey together as we continue to resurrect and grow the Cathedral of St. James and the Episcopal Diocese of San Joaquin.



Along The Camino



DEAN NEWMAN, ERIN & LEXIE

As I read through the Cathedral's profile, I was profoundly touched by two statements: (1) *"We are hopeful that our new Dean will also have a desire for service and see the Cathedral as a place where 'church' happens every day of the week;"* and, (2) *"We are hopeful that our new Dean will help us to live into what it means to be 'Cathedral' and the seat of the Diocese."*

I am ecstatic to hear that the Cathedral congregation is eager to be the Church between Sundays in very tangible and life-giving ways each and every day. Cathedrals thrive when they embrace and exemplify a daily commitment to being the Church in the world through worship, education, outreach, and advocacy. Also, I cherish the opportunity to work with all of you as we continue to discern and live out the Cathedral's identity, mission, and vision. It is a tremendous call and responsibility for each of us, but together, we can be the Cathedral that God is calling us to be—a place of faith, welcome, joy, renewal, and service.

Some days the work is going to be easy . . . but many days it might be hard. Faithfully building up the Kingdom of God everyday can be a monumental, difficult, and even scary endeavor. My own fears were confirmed when Emily Niblick wrote me an email lovingly saying, *"We all hear that things are going to be much better 'when the Dean comes.' Not meaning to put too much pressure on you, of course!"*

Thanks to your dedication, service, and leadership, and the work of individuals like Bishop David and Canon Anna, St. James is well on the path to becoming an exceptional, spirit-filled, and transformational community of faith. My prayer is that God will use me, so I can further shepherd,

equip, and empower our Cathedral Family to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ and to serve the people of God, especially those most in need and most vulnerable.

With new leadership, there is always optimism and concern regarding “change.” *What changes will the new Dean make?* As a pastor in a new community, my first responsibility is to listen and observe—I am called to “learn the story” of the congregation and individuals’ stories. Yes, there may be some small changes in the first couple of months (ie. an updated worship bulletin, enhanced marketing and communications); but, I would not expect sweeping changes, especially right away or without thoughtful discernment and dialogue. As you will learn, I tend to be a high-energy, motivated pastor and leader—so my daily personal prayer, especially in the first year, will be for me to slow down, take a deep breath, and be patient. Thankfully, God has blessed me with an infant daughter who is testing (and teaching me about) my everyday commitment to be patient.



LEXIE

In closing, Erin, Lexie, and I look forward to meeting and getting to know our new St. James family. In the meantime if you have any questions, comments, concerns, stories to share, or even suggestions for great places to eat or visit in the Fresno/Clovis area, I can be reached via email (dean@stjamesfresno.org).

May God continue to guide us as we are pilgrims on The Way.

Faithfully in Christ,
ryan+

The Reverend Ryan D. Newman
Dean-Elect, St. James Episcopal Cathedral
The Episcopal Diocese of San Joaquin

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR DECEMBER 1ST--A VERY SPECIAL DAY

December 1st marks a special day at the Cathedral! At 11 am, Rev. Ryan Newman will be installed as the Dean of Saint James Cathedral, with all the pomp and circumstance befitting such an event in the Episcopal church. Following this will be a luncheon reception hosted by the Episcopal Church Women (RSVP to office@stjamesfresno.org). Then, at 2:00 pm, the new deacons will be ordained to the diaconate. This will be followed by a dessert reception once again hosted by our Episcopal Church Women. Everyone is welcome to attend both these special events.



The Episcopal Diocese of San Joaquin

and

St. James Episcopal Cathedral

cordially invites you to a

SERVICE OF INSTALLATION

to celebrate the Call of

THE REV. RYAN DOUGLAS NEWMAN

as

CATHEDRAL DEAN

On Saturday, December 1, 2018, 11:00am

at

St. James Episcopal Cathedral

4147 E. Dakota Ave.

Fresno, CA 93726

Luncheon to follow

Clergy: white stoles

Please RSVP to: canonanna@diosanjoaquin.org



In Memoriam

Diana Kittredge

1925-2018

Diana Miles Kittredge, dearly beloved wife, mother, grandma and great grandma (fondly known also as Gamie and GG (GiGi) died peacefully in her sleep Friday, October 26, 2018 at age 93 in her apartment at the Terraces – San Joaquin Gardens.

Diana was born to Thomas and Blodwen (Evans) Miles on August 31, 1925 in Glamorgan South Wales, UK. The family moved from Wales to the costal town of Bournemouth, England, where she attended Bournemouth School for Girls and later entered Miss Casanders College for Young Ladies. During WWII the family was relocated inland to Andover, England. Here at the age of 14 she became youth Air Raid Warden and helped put out many incendiary bombs with her pails of sand and shovel. Later, at the end of WWII as a civilian employee of the British Foreign Offices “Control Commission Germany”, she covered many war crimes trials in the British Zone of Germany as a Court Stenographer. This led to her becoming, while still in Germany, PA (personal secretary) to Major General Dalton and then Brigadier General Ransome, both of whom were a part of the British Foreign Office. During this time she met and fell in love with her darling, ever patient and loving husband, Robert E. Kittredge. They married July 7, 1955 at a little old church in Long Marsten, Yorkshire, England.

She is survived by her husband, Bob, to whom she was married 63 years; their four children Dawne Kittredge in Pleasanton, David Kittredge in San Francisco, Paul Kittredge and wife Janice in Walnut Creek, Susan Cooper and husband Mark in Poway; plus six grandchildren Hilary Halliday and husband Jeff, Lauren Blaik and husband Geoff (living in Australia), Ashley Galvez and husband Michael, Adam Kittredge and wife Andrea, Hannah Cooper and Kelsey Cooper; and great-grandchildren Max, Livi, Ari, Ava Grace, Grayson and Madison.

Diana had a wonderful life and felt grateful for all her blessings.

A memorial service for Diana will be held at St. James Episcopal Cathedral, 4147 E. Dakota Avenue, Fresno on Saturday, December 8, 2:00 p.m., followed by a Celebration of Life reception in the Zoe Eden Community Hall behind the Cathedral.

In lieu of flowers Diana would invite any remembrance to be sent to Poverello House or Hinds Hospice in Fresno.

Gracious savior, we thank you for the blessings of Diana's life, and give thanks for her loving family. Please comfort all of us who love Diana, and be with her family as they cope with their loss.

For your servant, Diana, may she rest in peace and rise in Glory. Amen.

meditation

For a long period of time I have thought that one of God's greatest gifts to us-- perhaps the greatest gift to us—is hope.

Hope—the promise of another day, another time, another chance, in which a turnabout may happen and one's outlook, one's fortune, will change. Isn't that what hope is? Hope is what makes life worth living, for without hope what would be the use of even trying? Oh, today's world tells us that what happens is fully explainable and was bound to happen—science can explain everything, without prejudice, without feeling. If science says there is no hope, then many times we blindly give up that hope and the world becomes so much darker.

But that is not God's way. That is not God's promise. Jesus came to us to show us that it is not just that we live and we die. No, because Jesus is proof that just because we may be looking at what the world says is the end of life we know better. For Jesus was, in flesh and blood, the proof of God's great gift of love.

How do I know? As a Pastor I presided over many funerals. Each time I felt that God was there with us, perhaps knowing in an even deeper sense the sorrow we were feeling. But there was a difference with God—God's concern for us was not so much weeping, although I felt he might have been right along with us, but also the reminder to us of his wonderful gift of hope. Because God knows that hope does not stop when we move on in death. Hope carries on, but at a fantastic new level, because hope then becomes fulfilled in the presence of God himself.

When I read the scriptures during a service, hope jumped out of the pages at me. Not just God's compassion, but pure hope, fulfilled. Scripture such as the twenty-first chapter of the book of Revelation tells us first of the holy promise that comes after death:

"he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away."

Death is no more. As Saint Paul wrote, "death where is thy victory, death where is thy sting?" God is there to wipe the tears from our eyes, and God does it not only because God loves us but because there is something more than death. God knows suffering—God himself in the person of Jesus suffered on the cross.

"I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us... For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience...No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

—Emily

Matthew Shepard Laid to Rest at National Cathedral Decades After His Murder

By Christine Hauser (New York Times)

It took decades to find a safe place for the remains of Matthew Shepard, whose murder in 1998 as a 21-year-old college student turned him into a symbol for violence against gay people.

But rest finally found him on Friday during a ceremony of prayer, speeches and hymns at the Washington National Cathedral, the neo-Gothic, Episcopal house of worship that is a fixture of American politics and religion in Washington.

His father, Dennis Shepard, said last month that the cathedral was an appropriate place for his son, who was once an altar boy in the Episcopal Church, to be buried, and one that he would have loved.

Mr. Shepard; his wife, Judy Shepard; and their two children watched as the urn bearing Matthew's ashes was conveyed down the aisle in a candlelit procession.



A single flute played “Morning Has Broken.”

“It is so important that we now have a home for Matt,” said Mr. Shepard, addressing the congregation. “A home that others can visit. A home that is safe from haters.”

Attendees, some of them weeping, filled the pews as Mr. Shepard spoke during the ceremony, which lasted more than an hour and was broadcast live on national television. The pews appeared almost filled to capacity in the 2,300-seat nave of the cathedral.

Mr. Shepard’s remains were later interred in the crypt, according to Kevin Eckstrom, a spokesman for the cathedral.

In 1998, Matthew Shepard, a gay student at the University of Wyoming, was robbed by two men, pistol-whipped and tied to a fence in Laramie, Wyo., where he hung bleeding in the cold until a passing bicyclist spotted him. He later died in a hospital. Mourners flocked to his funeral in Casper, Wyo., but so did protesters carrying derogatory signs.

His parents wrestled with a location for a burial after that, fearing it would be at risk of desecration. The family had considered other options, including spreading his ashes over the mountains and plains of Wyoming. But they settled on the cathedral because they wanted a place they could visit to talk to him. And that is what his father during his speech on Friday encouraged others to do.

“Matt was blind just like this beautiful house of worship,” Dennis Shepard said. “He did not see skin color. He did not see religion. He did not see sexual orientation. All he saw was a chance to have another

friend. Just like this beautiful home we have here right now.”

He thanked those gathering for “helping us take Matt home.”

Mr. Shepard and others who addressed the congregation emphasized that the cathedral was an inclusive, accepting place, whether they were religious or not, and regardless of their sexual orientation.

Rev. V. Gene Robinson, who became the first openly gay bishop in the Episcopal Church in 2003 but has since retired, gave the homily.

“If you close your eyes and open your hearts, Matt is right here,” he said. Then later, weeping, he said there were three things he wanted to say to Matthew:

“Gently rest in this place. You are safe now. Oh yeah, and Matt, welcome home. Amen.”

REPORT FROM ALTAR GUILD

The Altar Guild is the silent partner of the Liturgical "staff". We currently have 9 members; but will be a Guild of 8 in the beginning of the year when Adrienne Cantrell and Travis start moving north. Our goal is to have at least 12 members; giving us 4 teams of 3 people each. The Altar Guild is the behind the scenes ministry that is vital to each and every service and they are always ready and willing to serve each week and for special services during the church year. Ours is also a spiritual ministry; closely related to the Holy Altar and the sacred vessels of the Eucharist. Therefore, it is a rewarding and blessed ministry.

We are currently planning for the upcoming flurry of events and activities that await us in November and December! The Installation of our new Dean and the Ordination of the Deacons on December 1st will be an exciting and historical event. Advent and Christmas are just around the corner and we are already making the many preparations that will go into helping

to make these Liturgical Seasons and Events memorable.

On December 23rd after the 10:00 Service we are inviting members of the congregation to join us in the "Greening of the Cathedral" for Christmas. In spite of the work involved, this is a fun and festive time — absolutely in the spirit of the Season. We plan to request donations for fresh poinsettias to decorate the Cathedral for Christmas and will be making envelopes for this purpose available by the end of October.

We will have a table at the Ministry Fair on November 4th and plan to have information on the Eucharistic Set-up and a hand-out on the symbolic meaning of the various vessels that we use during Communion.

—Carol Gavette

FOOD BANK NEEDS RECIPES AND FOLKS TO COOK THEM!

Cold winter days are ahead of us. To those who come to the Saint James Food Bank on Wednesday afternoons, that means standing in the cold until they can come inside when the doors are opened. For the homeless who come to the Food Bank that means they will always be cold.

Sharon McDermott has an idea. For some time now the Food Bank has been serving little snacks and sandwiches to folks while they wait, but she feels they will need something to warm their insides soon. So she is putting out a call for recipes for simple cold weather food—soups, or maybe casseroles that can serve many. For their purposes, she will need recipes that can be adapted for

200 to 400 people. Do you have a delicious, simple recipe that you would like to share?

Along with that, they need volunteers to do the cooking! Because there are no cooking facilities in the Zoe Eden Center the cooking will be done in the Cathedral kitchen. If you are at all interested in perhaps spending a Wednesday now and then cooking for our neighbors, or if you have a recipe you think would be ideal, please talk to Sharon, or email her at sharonm44@gmail.com.

ECW DOINGS

With only two meetings under our belt, the women of St. James are excited to finally have an ECW "up and running." Our initial focus has been on fellowship, but the ladies have many ideas as to "finding their place and purpose" within the body and life of St. James. Meetings are presently set for the first Sunday of the month, Fireside Room, following the 11:00 coffee gathering.

Our focus, through the end of the year, will be



providing assistance at the Thanksgiving Feast, chairing the luncheon following Dean Ryan's installation, and the reception following the ordination of the Deacons. Cathy Cabiness has offered to contract a caterer for the Dean's luncheon. Pete Cabiness will be making contacts to underwrite the luncheon costs. The reception costs will be paid by the diocese. Committees will be formed, at the November 4th meeting, to attend to areas of responsibility for the luncheon and reception. The women, soon after the first of the year, will be doing an inventory to determine what kitchen, and

other adjunct supplies, are needed. They want to be prepared to provide, or assist, at church functions, funerals, celebrations, social gatherings, etc. Twenty round, white, linen table cloths and a number, yet to be decided, of large rectangular table clothes are being purchased and donated by an ECW member.

The women eagerly await input from Dean Ryan. We're quite certain he will inspire ECW with new visions and opportunities to undertake in the life of the cathedral.

—Jane Fisher

IMMIGRATION TASK FORCE ASKS FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Heeding the call to welcome the stranger

The Episcopal Diocese of San Joaquin Immigration Task Force works with others to support refugees and immigrants in our midst. Regardless of their immigration status, they are our neighbors. SJRaise states our commitment: San Joaquin Refugee and Immigration Support and Empowerment. We work as a matter of faith to ensure the dignity and human rights of all people.



Support the work of the Immigration Task Force by purchasing one of these shirts that features their logo (designed by Zoe Rice). SJRaise stands for San Joaquin Refugee and Immigrant Support and Empowerment. Thanks!



You may purchase your shirt at:

<https://www.customink.com/fundraising/sjraise>

Learn more: www.sjraise.org

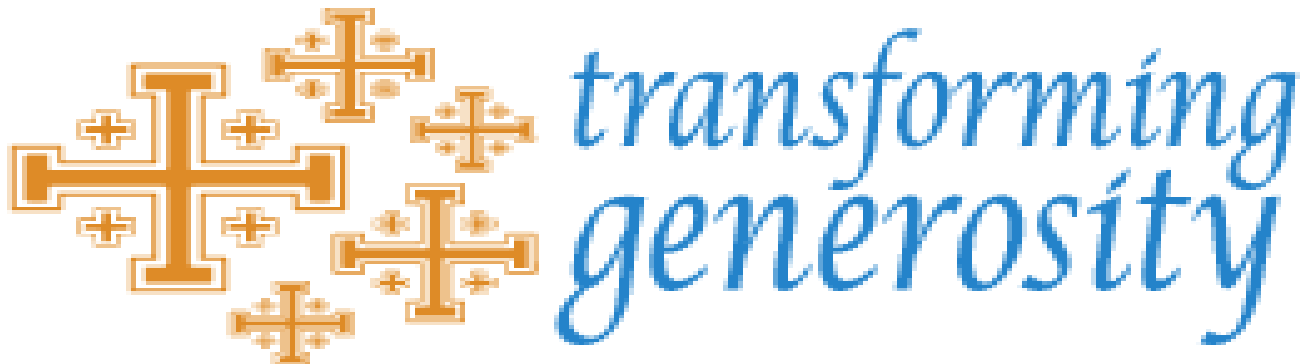
THANKSGIVING LUNCHEON SET FOR NOVEMBER 18TH

Have you filled out your pledge card for next year's giving yet? Please do it in time for the celebration on Sunday, November 18th. There will be a blessing of the pledges at worship and then we will all gather for a great Thanksgiving luncheon!

The members of your Chapter are supplying the scrumptious turkey and ham, and we ask you to bring a side. That can be mashed potatoes, a salad, veggies...whatever!

Plan on being in church on November 18th! And you can turn in your pledge card any time but November 18th is the last day!





Dear St. James Cathedral Community,

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry often describes us as “The Episcopal branch of the Jesus movement.”

As we begin to talk about stewardship of our Cathedral and wider community, I want to pose these questions: What does it mean for us to be part of the Jesus Movement? What is God calling us to do as followers of Jesus?

As Episcopalians, we love our worship. Our liturgies inspire us. The Eucharist is at the center of our lives. We believe the bible is the word of God and we are people of the Word.

As part of the Jesus movement, we follow the One who loves us so much that he gave his life so that we might understand God’s never-ending love for all of creation.

And here’s the hard part: As followers of Jesus, we are called to give all of ourselves to God’s work in the world. In the sixth chapter of Matthew’s Gospel, Jesus, after teaching us how to pray, talks to us about money, our needs and our hope. He reminds us that we cannot have two masters. We cannot love God and money.

Jesus then says:

“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?”

He finishes by calling each of us with these words, “But seek first God’s kingdom and God’s righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.”

How would our Cathedral —how would we — be transformed if each of us remembered these words of Jesus? We are indeed called to set new priorities.

Establishing new priorities for ourselves and for our Cathedral means transforming how we think about generosity. That transformation will call upon us to look for generosity in every aspect of our work and in every aspect of our lives. Remember the tenth chapter of Mark’s Gospel: “Jesus, looking at the man, loved him and said, ‘You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.’”

Jesus calls us to take the long view. Again he challenges us to give all of ourselves to God’s righteousness and trust in God’s care.

What a challenge! What transformation!

I hope you’ll join me as we work together to transform generosity in our Cathedral, our community and our lives.

From October 14th through November 18th you will hear stories from individuals in the Cathedral community who are engaged in various ministries; you will hear them talk about the importance of these ministries and why they matter to our Cathedral and our neighborhood.

On October 21st you will receive a pledge card for 2019. It is our hope that you will prayerfully consider a generous pledge to St James Cathedral to support the ministries of our community--the ministry of the new Dean, Outreach, Worship and Education--as well as our common home.

On November 18th, your Chapter and Episcopal Church Women will host a Thanksgiving luncheon following the 10am service as a way of giving thanks for your generosity, as well as the abundance of God's blessings.

We ask that you return your pledge card no later than November 18th so we can begin to plan the Cathedral budget for 2019 and be good stewards of your gifts.

If you have questions or concerns about how you can contribute to St James Cathedral, please feel free to talk to your Chapter or to me.

Faithfully,

Cn. Anna



THANKS TO EVERYONE WHO HELPED WITH SUCCESSFUL CROP WALK!

Thanks to all who participated in yesterday's Walk against hunger. We, as a congregation, Team St. James, had the blessing of turning in \$1,335.00 to Church World Service for their work to alleviate hunger among our brothers and sisters world wide and in our community. Many thanks to everyone who donated, walked, and prayed for our cause!

Again, thanks to all walkers and sponsors for " Helping to stop hunger one step at a time."



St James Cathedral Food Bank Ministry

WOW!!!

- St. James Episcopal Food bank provides food each second, third, and fourth Wednesdays of each month.
- In September, attendance exceeded 200 families each month; we have logged over 8,890 unique family visits since Jan 2017
- Since 2017, the monthly produce day (third Wednesdays), over 70,000 pounds of fresh foods have been distributed to 3,355 families
- Volunteer hours in 2018 exceed 5,400, including over 2,150 hours from community folks
- To date, Smart and Final donated over 10,500 pounds of meat protein - chicken, turkey, pork, beef, lamb



2018 changes made



- To bring value and dignity to our neighbors, introduced of "choice versus bagged option"
- Implementation of table fellowship which has built relationships among neighbors, as well as our volunteers, fostering opportunities for pastoral care '
- Provide nutritious snacks to guests
- Implemented a Children's Corner for children social's time
- Expansion of "yellow bag " ministry to our unhoused guests
- Built a solid team of community and church volunteers
- Due to increased numbers served, reduced Wednesday distributions to 3 per month



THRIFT SHOP

REPORT...

We have a new Name: The Cottage Shop! We are already moving forward with setting up our new name.

We opened on September 12th after being closed for the Summer (due to the extreme heat.) Our totals for the 3 weeks in September 2018 was \$800.54 compared with 4 weeks in September 2017 at \$479.30. We hope this is a true trend and that we can anticipate continued upward sales figures. This may be due to the visible signage



on the corner of Dakota and Cedar (thank you, Bishop Rice) and/or the fact that people are getting to know us. However, I do know from talking to our customers that many of them are now "finding" us! Hopefully, it's a combination of the two. Our total income for the Fiscal Year July 2017-June 2018 was \$6,061.69. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we could see that up closer to \$10-\$12,000? That will require several things to happen - more people to join our ministry so that we can open more often, someone to help us with social media presence including a website and more signage. Kay Sermon has graciously repainted the sign on our front porch with our new name and current opening hours! (Thank you, Kay)

We continue to have very fine donations! Our items are high quality and we really do have the best prices; thereby offering a great product at prices that help our neighbors. A win-win situation. We get requests for home goods - sheets, towels, curtains, small appliances, pots and pans, flatware, etc.

It may take a while, but we've also had pretty good luck selling furniture that we can price reasonably.

We are now open not only on Wednesdays from 12:30 to 4:30, but also on the First Saturday of each month from 9:30 to 1:00 (thank you, Priscilla Metry) and hope we can expand our Saturday opening days. We have had chats with several people who seem interested in giving the Thrift Shop Ministry "a try"... let's pray that they find this the rewarding ministry that those of us who've been working there the last year have found (Priscilla Metry, Janie Fisher, and of course, Tim Peargin and me)

Diocesan Events

Commission on Ministry
November 3, 2018 10am
St. James Cathedral, Fresno

Standing Committee Meeting
November 27, 2018 6:30pm
Zoom

Diocesan Council Meeting
November 28, 2018, 6:30pm
Zoom

Day of Diocesan Celebration
Saturday, December 1
St. James Cathedral, Fresno
11am
Dean Installation
2pm
Deacon Ordinations

Advent Clergy Conference
December 11-13. ECCO

Thanksgiving at ECCO - November 22, 2018

Join ECCO in celebrating Thanksgiving without the hassle! Let our expert kitchen staff prepare a variety of turkey, prime rib and ham, plus all the trimmings! A delicious variety of desserts, beverages, and much, much more are included in our very reasonable price.

Schedule of Events:

11:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist with Bishop David Rice

12:15 p.m. Appetizers

1:00 p.m. Dinner followed by games and relaxation

Pricing for Thanksgiving festivities is as follows:

Adult-\$39.00

Children 4-11- \$19.50

Children Under 4-Free!

Lodging packages are available for guests who wish to avoid the holiday traffic.

Please visit our website at www.ECCOjosemite.org
or call 559-683-8162 to register.

Reservations are required. Registration deadline is November 9th.



God Willing and the People Consenting

The Right Reverend David Cappel Rice

Bishop of San Joaquin

Will Ordain

Terrance M. Goodpasture

Amy L. Larsen

Gregory T. Masztal

Marilee E. Muncey

To the Sacred Order of Deacons in Christ's One, Holy,
Catholic and Apostolic Church on
Saturday, the First of December Two Thousand Eighteen at
Two O'Clock in the Afternoon.

St. James Cathedral
4147 E. Dakota Ave.
Fresno, CA 93726

Your prayers and presence are requested