



St. Michael the Archangel Parish

The Neocatechumenal Way

Offering a Valuable Opportunity to Join in Community and Grow in Faith

Jonathan and Nazarena Stenger invite parishioners this spring to learn about the Neocatechumenal Way, of which they've been part for years. The Stengers will have two seminarians with them when they come this spring to share a talk story series. They all look forward to sharing the faith with parishioners.

"The Neocatechumenal Way has been around since the Second Vatican Council," Jonathan says. "It is inspired by the Holy Spirit. We are trying to live Christian lives."

The Neocatechumenal Way has been in Hawai'i for 30 years, but this is the first time it's been introduced to Hawai'i Island. Fr. Lio looks forward to building this movement here at the parish.

"This isn't an association or a group," Jonathan says. "This is an encounter with Jesus to announce the Good News that Christ has destroyed death and risen from the dead."



Jonathan and Nazarena Stenger

The Neocatechumenal Way can help people learn more about the Catholic faith. The hope is for faith communities to form naturally after the talks. Small communities are a facet of the Neocatechumenal Way.

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KĒKĒMAPA/DECEMBER
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CELEBRATING KALIKIMAKA WITH A SPIRIT OF STEWARDSHIP:

SHARING THE GIFT OF CHRIST

As Catholics living in an increasingly secular world, we must remember to find ways to keep the true meaning of Christmas — the celebration of the birth of our Savior Jesus Christ. Beyond the exchange of makana and festive decorations, Christmas is a time to embody the spirit of stewardship. Stewardship involves sharing our time, talent, and treasure to reflect the love and generosity of Christ. Let's explore how to celebrate Christmas properly and reverently in the spirit of stewardship.

Stewardship of Time: Makana of Presence

Christmas is a season to be fully present with 'ohana and, most importantly, with Christ. Make time for prayer and reflection, not just amidst the hustle and bustle but as a daily practice. Attend Advent and Christmas Masses, immersing yourself in the profound liturgy. Consider participating in Eucharistic Adoration, contemplating the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Sharing your time in prayer and reflection helps deepen your relationship with Christ and your family.

Stewardship of Talent: Sharing Your Makana

Christmas provides an opportunity to share your unique talents and skills in service to others. You can create handmade gifts, such as cards, crafts, or baked goods, to show your love and care. Singing, playing instruments, or joining the church choir can enhance the beauty of Christmas liturgies. Additionally, consider volunteering your time and talents at local charities, Hope Services, or organizations that serve the less fortunate. Your talents can be a source of joy and comfort to those in need during the Christmas season.

Stewardship of Treasure: Generosity and Charity

Christmas is an ideal time to practice generosity and charity. Rather than focusing solely on the material aspect of gift giving, emphasize the true meaning

of giving by sharing your treasure in ways that benefit others. Support our parish and other charitable organizations financially. Consider donating to a local charity, sponsoring a family in need, or contributing to missions that serve vulnerable populations. Your financial contributions can make a significant impact on the lives of those less fortunate.

We also must remember that stewardship isn't limited to just one day; it's a spirituality and a way of life that can be lived throughout the Christmas season:

- **Advent Preparation:** Use the Advent season to prepare spiritually for the coming of Christ. Incorporate prayer, acts of kindness, and almsgiving into your daily routine.
- **Family Traditions:** Create family traditions that emphasize stewardship, such as volunteering together, making charitable donations as a family, or collectively choosing gifts for less fortunate children.
- **Sharing the Nativity Story:** As you gather with family and friends, take time to share the Nativity story and its profound significance. Encourage others to embrace the spirit of stewardship and share in the joy of Christ's birth.

By sharing your time, talent, and treasure, you can live out the teachings of Christ, deepen your faith, and make a meaningful impact on the lives of others. Embracing stewardship during the Christmas season transforms the holiday into a truly joyous and spiritually fulfilling occasion.





The Harmonious Path to Stewardship: Liturgical Music in the Sacred Liturgy

Mass is the sacred and central act of worship that makes present Christ's sacrifice to the Father and brings together the faithful to partake in the Body and Blood of Christ. At the heart of this divine celebration lies liturgical music, which serves as a powerful medium to deepen our connection with God. The significance of liturgical music during the Mass cannot be overstated. Let's explore the profound importance of this musical element and how parishioners can live out stewardship by sharing their time and talents through participation in parish music ministries.

Liturgical music plays a multifaceted role in the Mass. It uplifts our souls, allowing us to transcend the mundane and connect with the divine. Here's why it holds such significance:

- **Enhancing Worship:** Music adds depth and emotion to the Mass, helping us express our love, gratitude, and devotion to God. It is a channel through which we can praise and adore Him.
- **Scripture Reflection:** Catholic hymns and chants for Mass are based on the Scriptures, reinforcing the message of the Gospel and aiding in its reflection. The music often accompanies the liturgical readings, making the Word of God resonate more deeply within us.
- **Community Bonding:** Singing together fosters a sense of unity among parishioners. The choir and congregation become a spiritual family, bound by the common goal of glorifying God through music.

Stewardship is the responsible and generous use of our time, talent, and treasure, in thanksgiving for

God's gifts to us, and for the service of God and others. Participating in parish music ministries is an excellent way to actively live out stewardship.

God has bestowed unique gifts on each of us. Those gifted with musical abilities can use their talents to serve the Church. Whether you sing, play an instrument, or have skills in music composition and arrangement, your contribution is invaluable.

Joining a music ministry allows you to work collaboratively with fellow parishioners. The bonds formed while creating harmonious melodies extend beyond the rehearsal room, enriching your sense of community and shared faith.

By actively participating in the music ministry, you contribute to the spiritual ambiance of the Mass. The beautiful hymns and melodies you create can inspire others and bring them closer to God.

When you offer your musical talents in service to God, it is an expression of gratitude for the gifts you have received. You become a steward of the gifts God has bestowed upon you, using them to bring His message to life.

Liturgical music is not merely an embellishment of the Mass — it is an essential element that elevates our worship, deepens our connection with God, and strengthens our sense of community. Through active involvement in parish music ministries, you can live out stewardship by sharing your time and talents in a way that enriches the spiritual experience of the entire parish. As you make music that resonates with the hearts of your fellow parishioners, you are living out your faith, serving your community, and contributing to the beauty and sanctity of the Mass.

An Inside Look at the Charismatic Prayer

Beginning in the United States in 1967, right after the Second Vatican Council, the charismatic renewal movement has continued spreading around the world. Here at St. Michael the Archangel Parish, our own Charismatic Prayer Group's efforts are supported through the Hawai'i Catholic Charismatic Renewal Service.

Parishioners Monica and Dr. John Choe were baptized in the Holy Spirit through the charismatic renewal movement more than 40 years ago. John profoundly encountered the Lord, transforming him to live intentionally all for Christ. A few years after Monica was baptized in the Holy Spirit, Monica converted to Catholicism and eagerly pursued God while raising the couple's six children.

"The Catholic Church has so much treasure, and I have been praying for more people to recognize and practice these treasures within the Catholic Church,"

Monica says. "I have been praying that the Church will be renewed vibrantly, grow, and become filled with many people."

In November 2023, John and Monica attended the International Charismatic Conference in Rome and felt the call to make the Life in the Spirit seminar more widely available, especially in remote places and among the poor and marginalized.

At St. Michael's, we celebrate Eucharistic Holy Hours for Healing and Healing Masses three times a year. In addition, there are prayer meetings held every Tuesday from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Grace Parish Center.

"During prayer meetings, we have praise and worship, teachings from Fr. Joe Badding, and various Catholic-endorsed teachings such as *Unbound*," Monica says. "After the teaching, we have time for sharing, praying for our families, and prayer intentions from the church office, for the nation, and the world."

Anyone is welcome to come and join. There is a Zoom prayer meeting also taking place every Saturday from 10 to 11 a.m. HST for those who cannot participate in person or who live off-island.

"The fruit of attending prayer meetings has so much impact on personal growth in Christ and renewing our relationship with Jesus," Monica says. "There is a steadfast commitment to prayer life and an increase in reading Scripture and attending Mass frequently as enthusiastic participants rather than as passive spectators. After being baptized in the Holy Spirit, many people



"Just a one-time Baptism or occasional prayer meeting isn't enough to build us to live in the Spirit or walk with the Holy Spirit. If we don't push ourselves intentionally to transform ourselves, it may not make any difference."

— Monica Choe



Prayer Group

Renewed by the Holy Spirit

experience an intimate relationship with Jesus. However, just a one-time Baptism or occasional prayer meeting isn't enough to build us to live in the Spirit or walk with the Holy Spirit. If we don't push ourselves intentionally to transform ourselves, it may not make any difference."

"We need to be connected to the Body of Christ, which can continually reinforce us to build up one another because the Holy Spirit works greatly through communal relationship — through the Body of Christ not through the individual," John adds.

Fr. Joe Badding and Fr. Lio have both been instrumental in helping the efforts of the charismatic prayer group. Their support, guidance, leadership, and prayer have been a huge blessing to all.



Eucharistic Revival:

Healing through the Blessed Sacrament

Adoration with Reflection and Prayer

St. Michael the Archangel Catholic Church
Kailua-Kona, Hawai'i

Those interested in attending the Life in the Spirit seminar, a Healing Mass or Eucharistic Healing Service may contact Monica Choe at 720-341-3752. Those interested in the Zoom meetings may contact Theresa Norris at 907-205-7192 or norristheresa@yahoo.com.

The Neocatechumenal Way *continued from front cover*

"These are not communities for a specific type of person — they are for everyone," Jonathan says. "Everyone is essential in the life of the Church."

The talk story series will allow attendees to see where Christ wants to meet them, reminding people of Christ in their lives and helping people discern where He wants to transform them.

"The death we fear, the worries, difficulties, barriers, and old age — Christ has overcome them," Jonathan says. "He can overcome them in our lives."

Through the Neocatechumenal Way, Jonathan hopes to see more people join the Catholic faith.

"The formation goes through all the stages that the catechumens of the early Church went through as they prepared for Baptism," he says.

You are invited this spring to learn more about the Neocatechumenal Way. Jonathan and Nazarena,

along with Fr. Lio, look forward to seeing the fruits in the parish.

"This is really an encounter with Christ — not a one-time event," Jonathan says. "The Lord is always inviting us to be on the journey, like the apostles — to have this journey of faith where the Lord can work in our lives."

In turn, the communities that naturally form have a profound impact on the faith of those who take part.

"They live a Christian life together of deepening faith, maturing in faith," Jonathan says. "They live a life according to the plan of God."

Be sure to check the church bulletin for the dates and times of the talk story sessions this spring.



New Year's Resolutions for Faithful Stewards

As we usher in the new year, it's common for people to make resolutions, setting intentions for the year ahead. These resolutions often revolve around personal growth, health, or career aspirations. However, for Catholics, the new year can be an excellent opportunity to connect these resolutions to living stewardship spirituality as a way of life. Stewardship is the practice of recognizing that everything we have is a gift from God and, in return, we are called to be responsible caretakers of those gifts by sharing our time, talent, and treasure with God and our parish. By aligning our resolutions with this principle, we can live a more faithful and purposeful life.

One of the core tenets of stewardship is gratitude for the gifts we have received from God. It's essential to recognize that our resolutions are, in themselves, opportunities to give thanks. When setting goals related to personal health, for example, we can be grateful for our bodies and resolve to take better care of them. When it comes to finances, we can acknowledge the financial blessings we have and make resolutions to manage them wisely and generously.

Stewardship extends to our spiritual lives as well. Many resolutions center on personal growth and self-improvement, which can easily align with our faith. Consider setting resolutions to deepen your spiritual life, such as attending Mass regularly, praying daily, or volunteering at our parish. These actions not only enhance your own faith journey, but also contribute to the spiritual growth of your community.

Another vital aspect of stewardship is the call to be generous and charitable. In your New Year's resolutions, consider how you can integrate acts of charity and service. You might resolve to volunteer more, donate to charitable organizations, or simply try to be

more compassionate and understanding in your interactions with others. These small acts of aloha reflect God's love and grace.

The stewardship way of life must begin at home with our 'ohana — our Domestic Church. Consider setting resolutions that prioritize spending quality time with your loved ones, committing to family prayer, nurturing your relationships with each other and Christ, and strengthening your community. Building and sustaining these connections is a powerful expression of stewardship, as it promotes unity and mutual support.

Our financial well-being is another area where stewardship principles can be applied. Make resolutions to manage your finances responsibly, budget wisely, save for the future, and share your treasure with God, the parish, and community. By doing so, you are acknowledging that your financial resources are a gift from God and that you are called to manage them prudently.

Stewardship calls for self-reflection and accountability for our actions. As you work towards your resolutions, periodically assess your progress, and reflect on how well you are honoring your stewardship kuleana. Consider seeking spiritual guidance or accountability from a mentor, priest, deacon, or fellow parishioner, to help you stay on track.

Incorporating stewardship into your New Year's resolutions is not just a way to set goals, but a profound way to live out your faith. It transforms ordinary resolutions into sacred kuleana that align with your core beliefs as a Catholic. By being mindful of the gifts God has bestowed upon you and actively seeking to be a good steward of those gifts, you can approach the new year with a sense of purpose, gratitude, and a stronger connection to your faith.



Join Us as We Honor Our Lady of Guadalupe

Celebrating the Mother of God and the Mother of All Humanity

On Dec. 12, the Church honors Mary under the title Our Lady of Guadalupe. This feast day commemorates Our Lady's apparition to St. Juan Diego on the hill of Tepeyac in Mexico. There, she introduced herself to him as the Mother of God and the Mother of all humanity.

And this year, as we celebrate this feast day, we will honor the Blessed Mother here at St. Michael with a day of festivities.

"We will begin this great celebration with the 'Mañanitas,' or morning serenade, dedicated to the Virgin, at 5:30 a.m. followed by fraternal coffee," Fr. Claudio says. "Then, in the afternoon at 6 p.m., the great Eucharistic celebration in her honor continues with a procession with the image of the Virgin around the church. The day ends with a great dinner for all in attendance."

The day's events have been orchestrated by Aniceto and Rosalia Ramirez with the help of many volunteers, and Fr. Claudio encourages all of us to attend.

"This celebration unites in one faith and in one Church men and women of all peoples, languages, races, and nations, to have a personal encounter with Jesus Christ through our Mother as the Virgin Mary," Fr. Claudio says.

In this way, it enables us to be visible signs of the Body of Christ.

Additionally, Fr. Claudio explains that this feast day is of particular significance for those of us in the

Americas, and he encourages us to participate in the celebration.

Our Lady of Guadalupe walked Tepeyac to accompany St. Juan Diego in 1531, and she continues to travel the continent today.

Pope Francis says, "When, by means of a picture or image, a candle or a medal, a Rosary or a Hail Mary, she enters a house, a prison, a hospital room, a nursing home, a school, a rehabilitation clinic, she

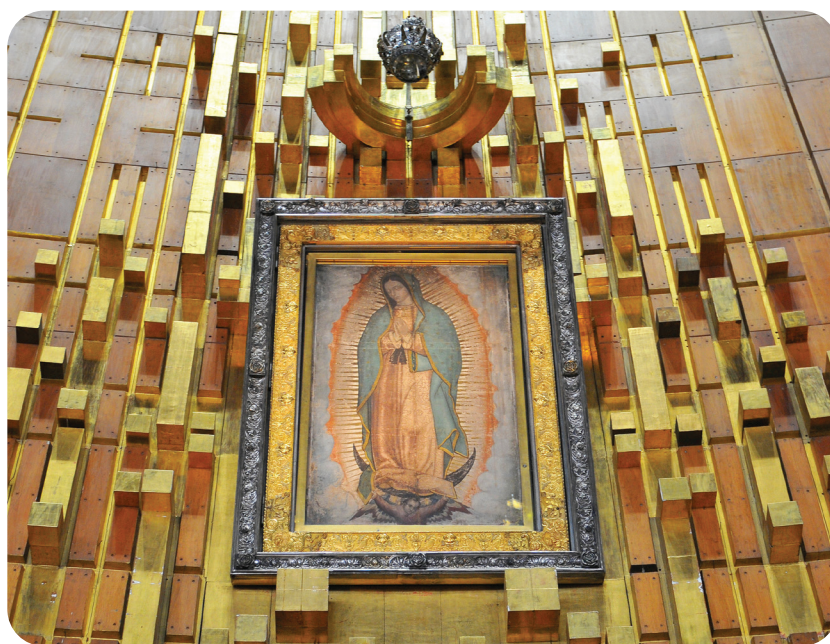
enters to say, 'Am I not here, I, who am your Mother.'"

Indeed, Mary continues to walk with us today as our Mother, leading us to her Son. It is for that reason that we take the time to honor her with such a grand celebration.

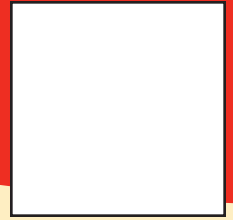
"This feast is of utmost importance for us, first of all, to renew our faith and to spread faith, hope, and charity to others," Fr. Claudio

says. "The veneration of the Mother of Jesus Christ leads us to do what He tells us (John 2:5)."

So, as we strive to grow as intentional Christian disciples here at St. Michael, we honor the Blessed Mother and follow her as she always brings us to Christ. She shows us what it means to give of ourselves for Christ and His Church.



*Make time Dec. 12 to join us for this celebration.
Let's join together as a parish and honor Mary as
the Mother she is to us all.*



St. Michael the Archangel Parish

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Advent and Christmas Schedule

TUESDAY, DEC. 10
ADVENT PENANCE SERVICE
6 P.M.

TUESDAY, DEC. 24
CHRISTMAS EVE MASSES
4 P.M., 6 P.M., AND 8 P.M.

WEDNESDAY, DEC. 25
CHRISTMAS DAY MASSES
7 A.M. AND 9 A.M.
11:30 A.M. (SPANISH)



Mass Schedule

Saturday Vigil: 4 p.m. • Sunday: 7 a.m., 9 a.m., 1:30 p.m. and 4 p.m. (English), 11:30 a.m. (Spanish) • Confessions: Saturday 9 a.m.
Daily: Mon-Sat 7 a.m. (St. Michael) • Mon-Tues-Thurs-Fri 5 p.m. (Immaculate Conception) • Wed 6 p.m. (Immaculate Conception in Spanish)
Adoration: Wednesdays 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.