



2323 Montgomery Drive
Santa Rosa, CA 95405
(707) 542-6984

PASTORAL STAFF

Rev. Frank Epperson, Rector
Fr. Gabriel Sanchez, Parochial Vicar
Rev. Bala Putchakayala, Parochial Vicar
Rev. Jeffrey Keyes, In Residence
Deacon Mike Heinzelman
Deacon Gary Moore
Deacon Russ Bowden

WEBSITES

Parish: www.steugenes.com
School: www.steugenesch.org
Email Comments/Suggestions to:
Office@steugenes.com

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Parish Office Phone	(707) 542-6984
Parish Office Fax	(707) 542-1621
Religious Education	(707) 326-3408
Finance Council – Marty McCormick	(707) 526-1700
Choir Directress – Pam Zieminski	(707) 578-8848
School Office	(707) 545-7252
Preschool Office – Tess Mellor	(707) 528-9133
Homeschool Academy– Jessica Warner	(707) 206-5579

PARISH OFFICE HOURS

Monday – Friday – 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Entrance is located at SW corner of Rectory

REGISTRATION IN THE PARISH

Our warmest welcome to all who worship in our community. If you are not registered in the parish, please complete a registration card. Cards are available at church entrances or at the parish office.

MARRIAGES & BAPTISMS

Please contact the office at least 12 months in advance for weddings and 3 months in advance for baptisms. Check the parish website for more information.

ANOINTING OF THE SICK

Please call the parish office when a parishioner is home bound or hospitalized to arrange for Holy Communion and Anointing of the Sick.



MASS TIMES

Daily Mass: 6:45 and 8:00 a.m.
Saturday: 8:00a.m; 4:30 p.m. & Sp.6:30 p. m.
Sunday: 7:30, 9:00 & 10:30 a.m.
12:00 noon and 5:30 p.m.
Tuesday Latin Mass: 5:30 p.m.
Sunday Latin Mass: 1:30 p.m.

CONFESSIONS

3:30 – 4:30 p.m. Saturday or by appointment

PERPETUAL ADORATION

Perpetual Adoration is in the Chapel of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. To sign up for your hour with our Lord, call Annette (English) at: (707)542-3635 or Maria Vega (Spanish) at: (707)710-5094

Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament is held in the chapel every First Friday following 8:00 a.m. Mass. *During this time of Covid-19, Benediction is not being held.*

DEVOTIONS

Recitation of the Rosary is Monday – Saturday at 7:25 a.m. in the Cathedral

Chaplet of Divine Mercy is Saturday after the 8:00 a.m. Mass in the Cathedral

CATHEDRAL SHOPS

Cathedral Thrift Shop Hours: Tues & Wed. 9:30 am–2:30 pm

Cathedral Books & Gifts Hours: Wed-Sat 8:30 am-4:30pm & Sun 8:30am-1:30pm, Closed Mon/Tues -
Phone: (707)542-0250

FOURTH SUNDAY OF EASTER – APRIL 30, 2023

PARISH CALENDAR

SUNDAY APRIL 30

Masses – Cathedral – 7:30 am, 9:00 am, 10:30 am, 12:00 noon, 1:30 pm (Latin) & 5:30 pm
RCIA - PLC – 10:30 am
Coffee Social – PLC – 8:00 am – 12:00 noon

MONDAY MAY 1

Morning Masses – Cathedral – 6:45 & 8:00 am

TUESDAY MAY 2

Morning Masses – Cathedral – 6:45 & 8:00 am
Women of the Word – PLC – 9:00 am
PSR – School – 3:45 pm
Latin Mass – Cathedral – 5:30 pm

WEDNESDAY MAY 3

Morning Masses – Cathedral – 6:45 & 8:00 am
Outdoor Rosary – Fatima Grotto – 6:00 pm
Bible Study – PLC – 7:00 pm

THURSDAY MAY 4

Morning Masses – Cathedral – 6:45 & 8:00 am

FRIDAY MAY 5

Morning Masses – Cathedral – 6:45 & 8:00 am
5 de Mayo School Fundraiser – Becker Center - 4-8:00 pm

SATURDAY MAY 6

Morning Mass – Cathedral – 8:00 am
Hour of Reparation – Fatima Grotto – 1:00 pm
Confession – Cathedral 3:30 – 4:30 pm
Sunday Vigil Masses – Cathedral – 4:30 pm & 6:30 pm
(Spanish)

SECOND COLLECTION INFORMATION

~ST. VINCENT DE PAUL~

This weekend, April 29 & 30, our Second Collection will be for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. Next weekend, May 6 & 7, our Second Collection will be for our Tuition Assistance Program. Thank you for your continued generosity!

~HOUR OF REPARATION~

Please join us on the First Saturday of each month at the Fatima Grotto at 1:00 pm on the East Lawn for an hour of prayers said in Reparation for the many grave offenses committed against the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary. Pray a Rosary and several other prayers as a group. We provide booklets that contain all of the prayers of reparation. Please, join us!

Hearing Aid Users, Switch to T-Coil

ADMINISTRATION

For the Week of: 4/16/23

Sunday Donations Received:	\$17,420.
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Second Collection: <i>No Second Collection</i>	N/A
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~ CATHEDRAL BOOKS & GIFTS ~

May is the month of Mary. With the beautiful blossoms of Spring, the warmth, and the new life around us, we celebrate our Blessed Mother. This month, our Special is 25% off all statues, pictures, and books of the Blessed Mother (sorry, no rosaries this month!). Stop in our store and get great deals! *Notice: The bookstore is looking for volunteers! Do you like working with people? Do you have experience in retail? Are you ready to make a difference in people's lives? If so, we need volunteers on Thursdays and Fridays, with a minimum commitment of 4 hours a week. Contact us at: (707) 542-0250 or come in and talk to the Manager, Mary, or the Assistant Manager, Nancy.* The shop hours are: Wed-Sat from 8:30 am-4:30 pm & Sun 8:30 am-1:30 pm. We are closed Mon./Tues. Call us at: 707-542-0250.

SCHOOL NEWS

~REGISTRATION HAS STARTED~

St. Eugene's Cathedral School has started its registration process for the 2023-24 school year. We are proud of our students and our school. We offer an excellent academic education with a challenging curriculum integrated with gospel values. We are accepting applications for all grades. Come by the school office to pick up an application or call 545-7252, and we'll send an application to you. You can also go to: www.steugenesch.org - "Admissions".

~SCHOOL FUNDRAISER~

St. Eugene's Cathedral School invites you to celebrate Cinco de Mayo with them on Friday, May 5th, from 4-8:00 pm in the Becker Center. Tickets are \$20 per plate and can be purchased at the school office and the parish office as well as at the door on the day of the celebration. Each plate includes: 3 tacos (chicken or beef) or 1 quesadilla with chips & salsa, agua fresca and a dessert. Enjoy an evening of music, dance and choir performances from our St. Eugene's students!

~THANK YOU~

St. Eugene's would like to extend a big "thank you" to our across the street neighbor, Boudin's Restaurant, for their generosity in donating all of the bread for our Meager Meals during Lent as well as for our Mini-Retreat snack time. The bread was delicious and much appreciated!

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday	April 29
8:00 am	Florence Skikos, deceased
4:30 pm	Claudia Skrypka, deceased
6:30 pm (Sp)	Esther Reyes, deceased
Sunday	April 30
7:30 am	Emily Bayardo, deceased
9:00 am	Paulina Pelaez, living
10:30 am	Pauliasi & Maureen Naivalurua, living
12:00 pm	People of St. Eugene's
1:30 pm (EF)	Abarca-Oritz Family, living & deceased
5:30 pm	Santa Rosa Fijian Catholic Community, living & deceased
6:00pm Newman Ctr.	Fr. Alan Acevedo, living
Monday	May 1
6:45 am	Joseph Benedict Arnerich, living
8:00 am	Pedro de Jesus Monterroso, deceased
Tuesday	May 2
6:45 am	Norman Lee Wally, deceased
8:00 am	Samuel Valencia, deceased
5:30 pm (EF)	Ricardo Olvera Galvan, deceased
Wednesday	May 3
6:45 am	Brendan & Vera Flanagan, deceased
8:00 am	Robert Cook, deceased
Thursday	May 4
6:45 am	Stanley Wynn Hayes, deceased
8:00 am	Albina & Romano Dragovina, deceased
Friday	May 5
6:45 am	Jarrett Burrell, living
8:00 am	Alberto Orozco, living
9:20 am (Sch)	Herminia Gomez Baños, deceased
12:00 pm (Hosp)	Lisa Tran, living
Saturday	May 6
8:00 am	In honor of and in reparation for the offenses against the Immaculate Heart of Mary and the Sacred Heart of Jesus and for the living and deceased members of the Russell and Rinaldi families.
4:30 pm	Fr. Desmond Devine, deceased
6:30 (Sp)	Jesus Gomez Arroyo, deceased

~REMEMBERING MOTHER~

Mother's Day envelopes are due in the collection basket this weekend, April 29/30, or to the Parish Office by 12:00 noon, Friday, May 5, for publishing in the May 14th Mother's Day Sunday bulletin. Names submitted after that date will be published in future bulletins.

SPIRITUAL ACTIVITY

~GROW YOUR FAITH WITH "FORMED"~

This is just a reminder that St. Eugene's has a subscription to a great Catholic Website called "*Formed*." This website is loaded with Catholic content and has a huge selection of movies, books and audio programs. Why not take a look and see what it has to offer for your spiritual growth? Simply type into your search engine: "Formed.org." This will take you to a section whereby you will click the link for "Sign up as a Parishioner." You then will need to write in, "St. Eugene" or the zip code "95405". Then, all you need to do is write in your name and e-mail address and you will have access to a stunning array of good, solid, Catholic educational content. Educate yourself today so that you have a good understanding of your Catholic Faith!

SOCIAL ACTIVITY

~KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS~

The St. Eugene's Knights of Columbus (K of C) is looking for a few good men! The Knights of Columbus is a Catholic fraternal organization that boasts almost 2 million members world-wide. Being a Knight means that you are a man of faith who seeks to help others. Our chapter at St. Eugene's meets on the third Thursday of each month from 6:00 p.m. until about 7:00 p.m. in the Becker Center. We generally precede the meeting with a dinner at 5:30 p.m. We are a very active chapter, planning activities such as organizing the buses for our annual Walk for Life, holding BBQ fundraisers for the Cathedral's New Roof fund as well as for our Troops of St. George Boys' Group and engaging in charitable activities such as recently helping one of our senior citizens pack and move his belongings to a new apartment and then unpacking his items and helping him settle in. If you are a Catholic man who would like to be a part of a Catholic brotherhood that seeks to help his parish and his parish community, please consider joining our local chapter! For more information or to join, please call: Chris Young at: 707-546-4910

~PLEASE PRAY FOR~

Those who are ill need your support and prayers: Tristan Humble, Samuel Agius, Marjorie Miles, Amelia Lansangan, Gail Brown, Leo Del Santo, Emeline Jane Smith, Rosalind Britto, Ken Davis, Rita Wyatt, Karen Mills, Eileen Carol, Nancy Amador, Patrick Welter, Cristeta Marentes, Jesus Navarro, Michael Boland, Stephen Warner, Aida Catapang, Bob Goldman, Pat Davenport, Paulita Castro, Jean L. Alfano, Theresa Pham, Rainey Olson, Michele Otten, Pauline Goslovich, Mary Gonzales, Nick Sidjakov, Sandi Picconi, Margaret Keifer, Joan Cosgrove, Denise Ealy, Becky Harber, Ernest Lanford, Daniel Bruce Moore, Megan Ingrassia and Art Haake.

The bulletin submission deadline is Thursday @ 3:00pm for the Sunday after next bulletin. We reserve the right to edit or omit items. E-mail items to: office@steugenes.com.

MY CATHOLIC FAITH

ON BAPTISM & SUFFERING

~FROM THE PASTOR~

Today, we read about two topics that are very important to the life of the Christian: Baptism and suffering for love of Jesus. Many non-Catholics view infant baptism as a teaching not in alignment with Scripture. We will show that this is not the case. We will also further explore redemptive suffering. Read on!

ON INFANT BAPTISM

~WHY BAPTIZE BABIES?~

"The Catholic Church has been baptizing babies ever since Christ commanded His apostles to baptize all people in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (see Mt 28:18-20). This has always been the practice of the Orthodox churches and of many Protestant denominations as well. Parents bring their babies to the waters of baptism by professing a belief in Christ on behalf of the child and promising to raise him or her in the faith. For adults who are to be baptized, the Church also requires them to profess their faith in Christ. Because baptism confers saving grace, the earlier a person comes to baptism, the better. In infant baptism, then, though the child is too young to have faith, the parents extend their faith on the child's behalf. On what basis does the Church believe that the faith of one person may be effective on behalf of someone else? The Scriptures are full of examples in which Jesus extends healing grace to people based on the faith of others. For example, Jesus forgives the sins of the paralytic based on the faith of those who brought him (see Mt 9:2; Mk 2:3-5). Jesus heals the centurion's servant based on the faith of the centurion (Mt 8:5-13). Jesus exorcises the child's unclean spirit based on the father's faith (Mk 9:22-25). We might also note that in the Old Testament, God spares the firstborn child's life during the Passover based on the parent's faith (see Ex 12:24-28). Given these examples, then, we must ask ourselves: If God is willing to effect spiritual and physical cures for children based upon the faith of their parents, how much more will He give the grace of baptism to children based upon the faith of their parents?"

~WHY INFANTS NEED BAPTISM~

"Why do children need baptismal grace for salvation? Because they inherit original sin from the moment of conception. The psalmist laments: "Indeed, in guilt was I born, and in sin my mother conceived me" (Ps 51:7). The Book of Job observes: "Man that is born of woman is of few days, and full of trouble. ... Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? There is not one" (Job 14:1,4, RSV). The apostle Paul tells us that "through one person sin entered the world, and through sin, death" (Rom 5:12). He does not say that this sin is manifested only when the person reaches the age of reason. Rather, he writes, before baptism "we were by nature children of wrath, like the rest" (Eph 2:3). Because babies are born with original sin, they need baptism to cleanse them, so that they may become adopted sons and daughters of God and receive the grace of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that the kingdom of God also belongs to children (see Mt 18:4; Mk 10:14). He never put an age limit upon those eligible to receive His grace (Lk 18:15-17; Mt 18:2-5). When St. Paul addresses the "holy ones" of the Church (see Eph 1:1; Col 1:2), these include the children, whom he addresses specifically in Ephesians 6:1 and Colossians 3:20. Children become "holy ones" of the Church and members of the body of Christ only through baptism." "The Scriptures also demonstrate that the early Church baptized babies. In the Book of Acts, for example, St. Peter preached to the crowd: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children and to all that are far off, whomever the Lord our God will call" (Acts 2:38-39). When St. Peter said the promise of baptism is for children, the word "children" (from the Greek teknon) also includes infants. This same word, teknon, is used later in Acts 21:21 to describe the circumcision of eight-day-old infants. The Greek word for "household," oikos, refers to all the members of a family, adults as well as infants and children. The Book of Acts speaks of whole households being baptized, so any infants and children who belonged to these households would have been included. St. Paul baptizes Lydia with "her household" (16:15); the entire

household of Cornelius (see 10:48; 11:14); the Philippian jailer “and all his family” (16:33); and the “household of Stephanus” (1 Cor 1:16). In none of these accounts is there ever any indication that infants and children are excluded from baptism. Finally, in any discussion of infant baptism we should remember the correlation between the Old Covenant and the New Covenant. Under the Old Covenant, babies were circumcised when they were eight days old (see Gn 17:12; Lv 12:3). This was the sign by which they entered into the covenant. St. Paul actually calls baptism the “new circumcision” when he writes: “In him you were also circumcised with a circumcision not administered by hand, by stripping off the carnal body, with the circumcision of Christ. You were buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead” (Col 2:11-12). Since baptism is the new circumcision of the New Covenant, baptism is for babies as well as adults, just as circumcision in the Old Covenant was for babies as well as adults. God did not make his New Covenant narrower than the Old Covenant. From the perspective of the first Christians – Jews who had been part of the Old Covenant – it would have been unthinkable to exclude infants and children from God’s New Covenant. The little ones had always been part of God’s covenant family. A covenant that excluded children would have been inferior to the original covenant. In reality, the grace of Jesus Christ and the New Covenant surpasses that of the Old Covenant (see Rom 5:15), to include not only infants, but Gentiles as well. God continues to extend His covenantal grace through the generations, then – not only to adults but to children as well, through the Church who offers His sacrament of baptism.” By John Salza, <https://www.simplycatholic.com/why-baptize-babies/>

THE VALUE OF SUFFERING

~OFFER IT UP~

“One of the more meaningful and fulfilling parts of Catholic doctrine—which is not as well-developed in other Christian denominations or even understood—is the incredible value of suffering. “Offer it up” habitually rolls off the Catholic tongue in response to the troubles that enter our lives. Unfortunately, many Christians believe that Jesus suffered and died for us so that we will *not* have to suffer at all. While Jesus *did* suffer and die to save us, and while the redeemed will one day have every tear

wiped from their eyes (Rev. 21:4), our path of salvation to that final, eternal reward in this life is to follow in His footsteps . . . and Jesus promised us that if we are truly His disciples, we will suffer just as He did (Phil. 1:29). This suffering is never meaningless; it is intended for the sanctification of our souls to prepare us for heaven, no matter what form it comes in: sickness, loss of a loved one, relationship trouble, financial hardship, emotional turmoil, family strife, religious persecution, natural disasters, career difficulties, government oppression, and so on. When Jesus took on human flesh in the Incarnation, He forever redeemed our human suffering. Therefore, suffering always teaches us about God, about ourselves, and about our relationship with him. If we “offer it up” we surrender all the pain to the redeeming power of the cross of Christ. And those who have done this well—the saints—tell us that their suffering was always worth it. St. John Vianney, the famous Cure of Ars and patron saint of priests, wrote catechetical instructions on various topics for the many souls he directed. Here is his teaching on the topic of suffering and the great worth it has in the life of the Christian: **“Whether we will or not, we must suffer. There are some who suffer like the good thief, and others like the bad thief.** They both suffered equally. But one knew how to make his sufferings meritorious, he accepted them in the spirit of reparation, and turning towards Jesus crucified, he received from His mouth these beautiful words: “This day thou shalt be with Me in Paradise.” The other, on the contrary, cried out, uttered imprecations and blasphemies, and expired in the most frightful despair. **There are two ways of suffering – to suffer with love, and to suffer without love.** The saints suffered everything with joy, patience, and perseverance, because they loved. As for us, we suffer with anger, vexation, and weariness, because we do not love. If we loved God, we should love crosses, we should wish for them, we should take pleasure in them. . . . We should be happy to be able to suffer for the love of Him who lovingly suffered for us. Of what do we complain? Alas! the poor infidels, who have not the happiness of knowing God and His infinite loveliness, have the same crosses that we have; but they have not the same consolations. You say it is hard? No, it is easy, it is consoling, it is sweet; it is happiness. Only we must love while we suffer, and suffer while we love. On the Way of the Cross, you see, my children, only the first step is painful. **Our greatest cross is the fear of crosses...**” Complete article: <https://www.goodcatholic.com/what-st-john-vianney-taught-about-the-value-of-suffering/>

MI FE CATOLICA

~DEL PASTOR~

Hoy hablamos de dos temas muy importantes para la vida del cristiano: el bautismo y el sufrimiento por amor a Jesús. Muchos no católicos ven el bautismo de infantes como una enseñanza que no está alineada con las Escrituras. Demostraremos que esto es falso. También exploraremos más a fondo el sufrimiento redentor. Siga leyendo!

SOBRE EL BAUTISMO DE NIÑOS

~¿POR QUÉ BAUTIZAR A LOS BEBÉS?

"La Iglesia católica bautiza a los bebés desde que Cristo ordenó a sus apóstoles bautizar a todas las personas en el nombre del Padre, del Hijo y del Espíritu Santo (véase Mt 28, 18-20). Esta ha sido siempre la práctica de las iglesias ortodoxas y también de muchas denominaciones protestantes. Los padres llevan a sus bebés a las aguas del bautismo profesando creer en Cristo en nombre del niño y prometiendo criarlo en la fe. Para los adultos que van a ser bautizados, la Iglesia también requiere que profesen su fe en Cristo. Dado que el bautismo confiere la gracia salvífica, cuanto antes se acerque una persona al bautismo, mejor. Por tanto, en el bautismo de niños, aunque el niño sea demasiado pequeño para tener fe, los padres extienden su fe en nombre del niño. ¿En qué se basa la Iglesia para creer que la fe de una persona puede ser eficaz en favor de otra? Las Escrituras están llenas de ejemplos en los que Jesús extiende la gracia curativa a personas basadas en la fe de otros. Por ejemplo, Jesús perdona los pecados del paralítico basándose en la fe de los que lo trajeron (ver Mt 9:2; Mc 2:3-5). Jesús cura al siervo del centurión basándose en la fe del centurión (Mt 8:5-13). Jesús exorciza el espíritu inmundo del niño basándose en la fe del padre (Mc 9:22-25). También podemos observar que en el Antiguo Testamento, Dios perdona la vida al primogénito durante la Pascua basándose en la fe del padre (véase Ex 12:24-28). A la vista de estos ejemplos, debemos preguntarnos: Si Dios está dispuesto a efectuar curaciones espirituales y físicas a los niños basándose en la fe de sus padres, ¿cuánto más concederá la gracia del bautismo a los niños basándose en la fe de sus padres?".

~POR QUÉ LOS NIÑOS NECESITAN EL BAUTISMO~

"¿Por qué los niños necesitan la gracia bautismal para salvarse? Porque heredan el pecado original desde el momento de la concepción. →

El salmista se lamenta: "En verdad, en culpa nací, y en pecado me concibió mi madre" (Sal 51,7). El Libro de Job observa: "El hombre nacido de mujer es de pocos días y está lleno de angustia. ... ¿Quién sacará cosa limpia de cosa inmunda? Nadie" (Job 14:1,4, RSV). El apóstol Pablo nos dice que "por un hombre entró el pecado en el mundo, y por el pecado, la muerte" (Rom 5:12). No dice que este pecado se manifieste sólo cuando la persona alcanza la edad de la razón. Más bien, escribe, antes del bautismo "éramos por naturaleza hijos de ira, como los demás" (Ef 2,3). Como los bebés nacen con el pecado original, necesitan el bautismo para purificarse, a fin de convertirse en hijos adoptivos de Dios y recibir la gracia del Espíritu Santo. Jesús dijo que el reino de Dios pertenece también a los niños (cfr. Mt 18,4; Mc 10,14). Él nunca puso un límite de edad a los que pueden recibir su gracia (Lc 18,15-17; Mt 18,2-5). Cuando San Pablo se dirige a los "santos" de la Iglesia (cfr. Ef 1,1; Col 1,2), entre ellos están los niños, a los que se dirige específicamente en Ef 6,1 y Col 3,20. Los niños se convierten en "santos" de la Iglesia (cfr. Ef 1,1; Col 1,2). Los niños llegan a ser "santos" de la Iglesia y miembros del cuerpo de Cristo sólo mediante el bautismo".

~LA IGLESIA PRIMITIVA~

"Las Escrituras también demuestran que la Iglesia primitiva bautizaba a los bebés. En el Libro de los Hechos, por ejemplo, San Pedro predicó a la multitud: "Arrepentíos y bautícese cada uno de vosotros en el nombre de Jesucristo para perdón de los pecados; y recibiréis el don del Espíritu Santo. Porque la promesa es para vosotros, para vuestros hijos y para todos los que están lejos, a quienes llame el Señor, nuestro Dios" (Hch 2,38-39). Cuando San Pedro dijo que la promesa del bautismo es para los niños, la palabra "niños" (del griego teknon) incluye también a los bebés. Esta misma palabra, teknon, se utiliza más adelante en Hechos 21:21 para describir la circuncisión de niños de ocho días. La palabra griega para "hogar", oikos, se refiere a todos los miembros de una familia, tanto adultos como bebés y niños. El libro de los Hechos habla del bautismo de familias enteras, por lo que todos los bebés y niños que pertenecieran a estas familias estarían incluidos. San Pablo bautiza a Lidia con "su familia" (16:15); toda la familia fue bautizada casa de Cornelio (véase 10:48; 11:14); el carcelero de Filipos "y toda su familia" (16:33); y la "casa de Estéfano" (1 Cor 1:16).

En ninguno de estos relatos se indica nunca que los bebés y los niños queden excluidos del bautismo."

~LA IGLESIA PRIMITIVA~

"Finalmente, en cualquier discusión sobre el bautismo de infantes debemos recordar la correlación entre la Antigua Alianza y la Nueva Alianza. Bajo la Antigua Alianza, los bebés eran circuncidados cuando tenían ocho días de edad (ver Gn 17:12; Lv 12:3). Este era el signo por el que entraban en la alianza. De hecho, San Pablo llama al bautismo la "nueva circuncisión" cuando escribe: "En él también fuisteis circuncidados con una circuncisión no administrada manualmente, despojándoos del cuerpo carnal, con la circuncisión de Cristo. Fuisteis sepultados con él en el bautismo, en el que también resucitasteis con él mediante la fe en el poder de Dios, que lo resucitó de entre los muertos" (Col 2,11-12). Puesto que el bautismo es la nueva circuncisión de la Nueva Alianza, el bautismo es tanto para bebés como para adultos, al igual que la circuncisión en la Antigua Alianza era tanto para bebés como para adultos. Dios no hizo su Nueva Alianza más estrecha que la Antigua Alianza. Desde la perspectiva de los primeros cristianos - judíos que habían formado parte de la Antigua Alianza- habría sido impensable excluir a los bebés y a los niños de la Nueva Alianza de Dios. Los pequeños siempre habían formado parte de la familia de la alianza de Dios. Un pacto que excluyera a los niños habría sido inferior al pacto original. En realidad, la gracia de Jesucristo y la Nueva Alianza superan a la de la Antigua Alianza (véase Romanos 5:15), para incluir no sólo a los infantes, sino también a los gentiles. Así pues, Dios sigue extendiendo su gracia pactada a través de las generaciones, no sólo a los adultos, sino también a los niños, por medio de la Iglesia que ofrece su sacramento del bautismo."

EL VALOR DEL SUFRIMIENTO

~OFRÉZCALO~

"Una de las partes más significativas y satisfactorias de la doctrina católica -que no está tan bien desarrollada en otras confesiones cristianas o ni siquiera se comprende- es el increíble valor del sufrimiento. "Ofrécelo" sale habitualmente de la lengua católica en respuesta a los problemas que entran en nuestras vidas. Por desgracia, muchos cristianos creen que Jesús sufrió y murió por nosotros para que no tuviéramos que sufrir. Aunque Jesús sufrió y murió para salvarnos, y aunque a los redimidos un día se les enjugará toda lágrima de sus ojos (Apocalipsis 21:4),

nuestro camino de salvación hacia esa recompensa final y eterna en esta vida es seguir sus pasos . . . y Jesús nos prometió que si realmente somos Sus discípulos, sufriremos igual que Él lo hizo (Fil. 1:29). Este sufrimiento nunca es sin sentido; está destinado a la santificación de nuestras almas para prepararnos para el cielo, sin importar la forma en que se presente: enfermedad, pérdida de un ser querido, problemas de relación, dificultades financieras, agitación emocional, conflictos familiares, persecución religiosa, desastres naturales, dificultades profesionales, opresión gubernamental, etcétera.

~EL SUFRIMIENTO NOS ENSEÑA~

Cuando Jesús tomó carne humana en la Encarnación, redimió para siempre nuestro sufrimiento humano. Por eso, el sufrimiento siempre nos enseña sobre Dios, sobre nosotros mismos y sobre nuestra relación con Él. Si lo "ofrecemos", entregamos todo el dolor al poder redentor de la cruz de Cristo. Y los que lo han hecho bien -los santos- nos dicen que su sufrimiento siempre valió la pena. San Juan Vianney, el famoso Cura de Ars y patrono de los sacerdotes, escribió instrucciones catequéticas sobre diversos temas para las muchas almas que dirigía. He aquí su enseñanza sobre el tema del sufrimiento y el gran valor que tiene en la vida del cristiano: "**Queramos o no, debemos sufrir. Hay algunos que sufren como el buen ladrón, y otros como el mal ladrón.** Ambos sufrieron por igual. Pero uno supo hacer meritorios sus sufrimientos, los aceptó con espíritu de reparación, y volviéndose hacia Jesús crucificado, recibió de su boca estas hermosas palabras: "Hoy estarás conmigo en el Paraíso". "El otro, por el contrario, gritó, profirió maldiciones y blasfemias, y expiró en la más espantosa desesperación. **Hay dos maneras de sufrir: sufrir con amor y sufrir sin amor.** Los santos sufrían todo con alegría, paciencia y perseverancia, porque amaban. En cuanto a nosotros, sufrimos con ira, irritación y cansancio, porque no amamos. Si amáramos a Dios, deberíamos amar las cruces, desearlas, complacernos en ellas. . . . Deberíamos alegrarnos de poder sufrir por amor de Aquel que amorosamente sufrió por nosotros. ¿De qué nos quejamos? Los pobres infieles, que no tienen la dicha de conocer a Dios y su infinita hermosura, tienen las mismas cruces que nosotros; pero no tienen los mismos consuelos. ¿Dices que es duro? No, es fácil, es consolador, es dulce; es la felicidad. Sólo que debemos amar mientras sufrimos, y sufrir mientras amamos. En el Vía Crucis, como verán, hijos míos, sólo el primer paso es doloroso. **Nuestra mayor cruz es el miedo a las cruces...**

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