

*May the peace and joy of Christmas  
remain in your heart always.*

*Best wishes for a  
Blessed Christmas and New Year!*

*The friars and staff of Mission San Luis Rey*

# The Connection

A Publication from Mission San Luis Rey



Goodness, I can't wait for this year to be over. I could never have imagined living through a year like we have just experienced throughout the world. That said, we do hear tidings of great joy with news about a COVID-19 vaccine coming; I can't help but think it's such a fitting time of year to be hopeful. Advent reminds us there is joy in waiting and is the start to a new season's beginning of hope. The pink "Gaudete" Advent candle

means rejoice, don't lose hope. Yes, though at the very time we are experiencing new and alarming numbers of new COVID-19 cases, we are also hopeful during Advent season as we continue expecting, waiting, hoping, and praying for a Savior, this time in the form of a vaccine for all. In the New Year, I wish all of you good health, strong faith, and many blessings. On behalf of the Franciscan Friars, the Mission San Luis Rey staff, and my family

(including the adorable Chloe) we wish you a Merry Christmas and a much-improved New Year in 2021.

Peace and joy,

*Gwyn Grimes*

Gwyn Grimes  
Executive Director



*Share hope for those who need it most*

## Care for Creation



Christmas is here and we have presents to wrap! How can we care for creation when we need lots of paper to make our gifts look pretty?

First of all, saving used giftwrap is a great start! If it is too wrinkled, set your iron on low and iron lightly. If you haven't saved

giftwrap, look around the house! You're sure to find brown paper bags, shopping bags - printed or not, fabric, jars, boxes, newspaper, magazines. For trimmings, you can use leaves, pine branches, buttons, old ribbon, lace, stamps. Once you have gathered everything and anything you can think of, gather the family and make giftwrap.



# Mission News

- **The doors of the Historic Mission Church** are currently open from 9am to 11am, for visitors to see the inside the church and also to light a candle. No noon Mass at this time.
- **The Mission Museum** is excited to present our new virtual tour for Fourth Grade Curriculum. Vist our website often for the premiere of more fun and informative tours of our most popular areas and topics: Historic Church Art Tour, Mission Gardens tour, and Mission History tour.
- **Behind-the-Scenes Tours**  
If you would like to take your family (same household only) on a Behind-the-Scenes tour, call 760-757-3651, ext. 170 to make a reservation.

Visit our website for current hours as they are subject to change. Updates are posted as we receive new information from the state and county regarding closures due to the pandemic.

[www.sanluisrey.org](http://www.sanluisrey.org)

## Our Cemetery

The St. Francis Memorial statue has been in the Mission cemetery for about a year now. Visitors to the Mission cemetery have shared with us how remarkable the statue is. St. Francis is now surrounded by three memorial stone benches and a rose bed for green cremated remains. It has become a lovely and peaceful place in our cemetery. The memorial leaves that are starting to fill out the branches of the tree lend wonderful significance for those families.

If you have a loved one you would like to memorialize or think a green burial is right for you or a loved one, I invite you to call



or visit Danielle or Stephanie in our cemetery office. If you haven't seen our St. Francis statue, please stop by – it is located behind the St. Matthew mausoleum. – just follow the road to the back of the cemetery. St. Francis welcomes you with open arms.

## Volunteer Profile: Alan Cruise



Five year ago, as Alan Cruise was walking past the Mission working on rehabilitation from an injury, he decided to stop by and see if there were any volunteer opportunities. And the rest, as

they say, is history. Alan is a pilot for American Airlines. He lives in Oceanside with his lovely wife, Carol. During his volunteer time at Mission San Luis Rey, Alan has been a museum volunteer and docent – for both our behind-the-scenes tours and 4th grade tours. The 4th graders love his corny jokes! Alan also helps out with other volunteer duties around the Mission. Alan and Carol are both very supportive of the Mission and the Parish. We are grateful to Alan for all he does for the Mission. His warm, positive attitude is infectious.

Thank you Alan!

# Franciscan CORNER

## Meet Our New Associate Pastor, Fr. Sam Nasada, OFM

I was born in Jakarta, Indonesia in 1978. I moved to the United States to get my degrees in Industrial Engineering, first in Oklahoma and then in Atlanta. I then went on to hold a couple of jobs in the manufacturing industries in southern California for a few years. After becoming more active with the local churches and the Indonesian Catholic young adult group in Los Angeles, I started discerning a call to priesthood

and religious life. I joined the Franciscans in 2010, professed solemn vows in 2016, and obtained my Master of Divinity degree from the Franciscan School of Theology in 2017. When the socio-political climate of the country seemed to be increasingly harsh toward migrants and refugees, after prayers and discernment, I decided to postpone my ordination in order to help establish a new Franciscan community in Elfrida, near the border town of Douglas, Arizona. We, friars in that community, worked together with a few nuns, other faith leaders, and humanitarian aid workers to help migrants and refugees during the height of the crisis in our southern border. Finally, on September 20, 2018 and December 3, 2019, I was




ordained as deacon and priest, respectively, at Our Lady of the Angels Conventual Church at the Franciscan Renewal Center, Scottsdale, AZ. I served there until my move to Mission San Luis Rey Parish in July 2020 to serve as an associate pastor.


*Fr. Sam*

## A Christmas Like No Other


This will be a Christmas like no other, so we thought we'd share some of the ideas we have heard about for a safe and socially-distanced Christmas.


 If you can't attend Christmas mass together watch lived-streamed mass or a recorded mass at the same time, you'll have the feeling of sharing it together.

 **Ideas for a virtual family Christmas.** Encourage everyone to wear their ugly sweaters, or show off their Christmas decorations at home. Play a few hilarious games, Christmas bingo, or do some fun Christmas trivia and just enjoy spending time together. If you want to exchange gifts, send ahead of time and open them together virtually, you could even share your Christmas dinner together virtually.


 Drive around and look at Christmas lights in your


neighborhood. Or google the best light displays in your area and take a drive to see them. Some folks even have their light displays choreographed to music. Pack some hot chocolate and cookies and make a night of it.


 You can still do the popular cookie exchanges this year with a little tweak. Instead of getting together to exchange the cookies drop them off at your friend's doors. It will be fun for you to come home to a cookie package on your doorstep too. Or, instead of sharing real cookies, why not start a Christmas cookie recipe swap instead? Fun new tradition!

 Enjoy an evening watching your favorite Holiday movie, trying a new one, or pick a movie theme; award winning movies, comedies, whatever you're in the mood for. You can set up a fun hot chocolate bar. Put out marshmallows, candy canes,

different flavor chocolate chips, butterscotch chips, peppermint schnapps or Baileys.

 **Give Back to the Community** Volunteering is a perfect Christmas activity to celebrate the spirit of Christmas. An easy thing to do at home is to write thank-you letters to troops, first responders, or teachers. Make baked goods (individually wrapped for safety) to take to first responders or your local retirement community.

 Help your local food pantry by packing up food items to donate or head to your local park and pick up trash. Check out your local community and see what else people need help with.

 Thank all the delivery people for dropping off your packages by putting out a basket by your door filled with water, candy, and individually packed snacks.

# Retreats & EVENTS

- **January 9, 2021**  
**Br. James Seiffert, OFM**  
9:00am to 2:00pm  
**Answering the Call: Embracing your Gifts for Ministry**  
Join Br. James in person at the Mission to explore your God-given gifts for ministry.
- **January 29-31, 2021**  
**Fr. Tom Weston**  
**Serenity Retreat**  
A weekend for men and women in recovery.
- **February 17, 2021**  
**Ash Wednesday Retreat**  
Retreat begins with Mass and distribution of Ashes
- **March 12-14, 2021**  
**Spring into Serenity**  
*A weekend for women in Al-anon.*
- **Quiet Days**  
Spend time in solitude and personal spiritual reflection without participation in a formal program. To make a reservation, call 760-757-3659.

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***All retreats are currently scheduled as in-person retreats. Participants will be notified of any changes.***

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**Visit our website for more information and updates and to make reservations.**

[www.sanluisrey.org](http://www.sanluisrey.org)

## Connect with us at the Retreat Center!

The COVID pandemic restrictions continue to impose many limitations on the Mission's Retreat Center. While we have been able to host retreats since last summer, in order to provide a safe environment and stay within the County guidelines, these retreats have had to be smaller than usual.

We are so grateful for every group and individual that have come to the Mission these last months, as always. We love the energy and joy they bring during these visits. Our guests are grateful for the opportunity to spend time in our peaceful and spiritual surroundings.

We are, of course, following all CDC guidelines for everyone's personal safety, so our guests feel secure in their spiritual visits to our Mission. We are all grateful for the change of pace when we are at the Mission, enjoying the grounds and inspired by the Mission history



and spirit; especially these last few months, with "COVID fatigue."

Unfortunately, with recent developments and the current mandated stay-at-home orders, we're unable to offer overnight stays. Day retreats, what we call Quiet Days, are still an option. If you need a break from working at home, or need a "quiet day" to work or unplug we may have what you're looking for. Visit the Retreat Center page of our website ([sanluisrey.org](http://sanluisrey.org)) for more details.

## Mission Gift Shop Open Every Day

Are you looking for the perfect Christmas gift? Do you want to read more about California and Mission history? Do you need a new prayer book, rosary or religious jewelry? Stop by the Mission Gift Shop and you are sure to find what you're looking for!



## Charitable deductions and the CARES Act

Previously, charitable contributions could only be deducted if taxpayers itemized their deductions on their tax returns.

However, taxpayers who don't itemize deductions may take a charitable deduction of up to \$300 for cash contributions made in 2020 to qualifying organizations. For the purposes of this deduction, qualifying organizations are those that are religious, charitable, educational, scientific or literary in purpose. The law changed in this area due to the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act.

The CARES Act also temporarily suspends limits on charitable contributions and temporarily increases limits on contributions of food inventory. More information about these changes is available on [IRS.gov](http://IRS.gov).