

## **Overview**

The Spanish Community began gathering at St. Cornelius on the first Sunday of March, 2016. What started as a monthly Spanish Mass at 1:00 p.m., became a weekly Spanish Mass in 2017, as attendance increased. Although most of the attendees live in the neighborhood, they previously attended Spanish Mass in other parishes.

The Spanish Mass Planning Committee was formed to assist with various tasks such as scheduling Spanish speaking priests, lectors, Eucharistic ministers, altar servers, ushers, formation of the Spanish Choir, and translating the bulletin. The Committee is made up of bilingual parishioners including Alfredo Trigo, Cathy Minnick, Jose and Marcela Adan, Patty Soto and Antonio Castro.

The Spanish Community became a vital part of St. Cornelius Parish through participation in the Parish Pastoral Council and Parish Commissions, as well as the Annual Parish Picnic and International Night. They continued to bolster their spiritual and social offerings through new events, such as the Concert of Praise to the Lord in August, 2019, monthly hospitality and Dinner Dances.

In March of 2020 when COVID struck, all activity came to a halt. Then in July of 2020, St. Cornelius Parish, St. Thecla and St. Tarcissus joined together to form a new parish: St. Elizabeth of the Trinity. The new parish continued to offer a weekly Sunday Mass at 1:00 p.m. Further, the Spanish Community is beginning to establish its ministries here.

## **Spanish Choir**

The Spanish Choir is led by Mr. Angel Abarca and has more than a dozen members, including guitarists, percussionists and singers. To join this ministry, please speak with Angel after Mass or come to a choir practice. All are welcome!

Practices are normally on Thursday evenings at St. Cornelius Church hall, from 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. (Entrance is by the far left door at the northeast corner of the church. However, please check the bulletin for updates.)

## **Spanish Guitar Practice**

The Spanish Guitar Practice is for those who would like to learn how to play guitar, particularly to join the Spanish Choir Ministry. Please check with Angel Abarca, Spanish choir director, if interested. Meetings take place only when there are active students (time and location to be determined).

## **Legion of Mary**

The Legion of Mary gives glory to God through the holiness of its members. The Legion is a lay apostolic association of Catholics, with the sanction of the Church, serving on a voluntary basis in some 170 countries. The unit of the Legion of Mary is called a praesidium, which holds a weekly meeting, where prayer is intermingled with reports and discussion. Members participate in the life of the parish through visitation of families, the sick, both in their homes and in hospitals and through collaboration in apostolic and missionary undertakings sponsored by the parish.

The St. Elizabeth of the Trinity's Praesidium is named "Maria, Reina del Universo" and since beginning this group in January of 2019, it has grown

## **ST. ELIZABETH OF THE TRINITY - OUR SPANISH COMMUNITY**

to nearly a dozen active members. The Legion of Mary meets on Wednesdays from 7:00 - 8:30 p.m. Please check the bulletin for the location. All are welcome.

Part of the Legion of Mary Ministry is the Pilgrim Virgin Statue Program. Because not everyone can go to Fatima, Our Most Gracious Mother comes to you. Each Sunday at the end of the Spanish Mass, the family who will be hosting the Pilgrim Virgin is called forward and blessed by the priest. This program offers families a beautiful way to draw closer to God through the prayers of Our Mother.

The commitments while hosting the Pilgrim Virgin are: 1. Pray the Rosary each day; 2. Make a special effort to avoid sin during her visit; 3. Perform some sacrifice or penance in reparation for sin. Watch the bulletin for information..

The Praesidium leader is Gaby Rousset. For information, please call her at (312) 749-7532.

### **Spanish Bible Study/Prayer Circle**

The Spanish Bible Study/Prayer Circle meets every Friday evening from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. in the Church. The meeting begins with the Rosary followed by a Holy Hour with Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Sometimes, the session features a guest speaker from the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Check the bulletin for updates or stop by on a Friday evening at 7 p.m. in the Church.

### **Advanced Spanish Bible Study**

This group comes together to pray and to plan and prepare the weekly Spanish Bible Study and other special events. This includes the Pentecost Retreat, the Posadas, Spanish Stations of the Cross, and Bible studies. Check the bulletin for specifics.

### **Spanish Mass Planning Committee Meeting**

This Committee plans the Spanish Mass, Hospitalities and other events for our Spanish Mass Community. All are welcome. Check the bulletin for specifics.

## **SPECIAL PARISH-WIDE TRADITIONS OF THE SPANISH SPEAKING COMMUNITY**

### **Bilingual Novena to Our Lady of Guadalupe**

During the nine days prior to the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the Spanish community prays the Novena to Our Lady of Guadalupe, Our Lady of the Americas, Patroness of the Unborn and Miraculous Conversions.

The miraculous Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe is the Gospel in picture form. She is the Immaculate Conception, as the Apocalypse describes, "a woman clothed in the sun, with the moon at her feet." Those who saw it realized immediately that she is greater than the sun, the moon, and the stars which they had worshipped as gods. For people today, in what is called the "New Age", she is also a sign not to worship the "forces" of

nature. But she herself is not a goddess. She has her hands folded in prayer, her eyes looking down in humility. To whom is she praying? The clue is in the brooch on her neck. It has a small cross. But she is not only praying to God, she has God within her to bring Him to the people of the Americas. You can see the compassion in the face of the Blessed Virgin. Hearing her tender message and gazing at this lesson of Catholicism in pictures, it is easy to understand that the Mother of Jesus is our Mother also!

To include all members of our parish, the decades of the Rosary are prayed alternating in Spanish and English, keeping in mind the intentions of all present.

The novena generally begins on December 3 and ends December 11.

### **Las Mañanitas**

The song “Las Mañanitas” is a traditional Mexican birthday song sung in Mexico and other Latin American countries at birthday parties, usually early in the morning to awaken the birthday person, and also before eating birthday cake. Years ago, it was common to give a child the name of the patron saint that corresponded to the day the child was born.

Every year, during the night between the 11th and 12th of December, mañanitas are sung to honor Our Lady of Guadalupe in many Latin American countries.

At St. Elizabeth of the Trinity, “Las Mañanitas” is sung at 6:00 a.m. in the church on December 12. Light refreshments are served afterward. All are welcome.

## **Our Lady of Guadalupe Mass & Fiesta**

For several years, the Spanish community has celebrated the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe at St. Cornelius with a bilingual Mass followed by a Hispano-American fiesta. Check the bulletin for information.

## **Las Posadas**

December 16th marks the start of the annual Posadas Navideñas in Mexico. Posada is a Spanish word for “inn,” and the Posadas Navideñas, which recall events leading up to the Nativity of Jesus, are a centerpiece of Christmas traditions in Mexico.

A local Posada begins with a street procession that re-enacts Mary and Joseph’s search for an inn on their way to Bethlehem, and is akin to a street-theater musical.

The protagonists of the story, most often portrayed in costume by children (and in rural towns, a real donkey may also be present), carry lighted candles along a prescribed route around a local neighborhood asking, through means of special Posada songs, for ‘room at the inn’—knocking on doors along the way.

Other children and adults follow behind, also participating in the Posada songs. Neighbors along the route open their doors and purposefully refuse Mary and Joseph (in song) until, at the end of the route, a designated house (or sometimes a local church or village hall) allows Mary and Joseph to pass, and a Christmas party ensues there.

The party, or Posada as it’s referred to, often features villancicos (Christmas carols) and a piñata.

Check the bulletin for information on this beautiful tradition..

## **Spanish Stations of the Cross**

The Stations of the Cross are prayed in Spanish on Friday nights in Lent (except for Good Friday) at 8:00 p.m., following the English Stations. (This takes the place of Spanish Bible Study/Prayer Circle on Friday nights during Lent.)

## **Pentecost Retreat**

Since 2018, the Spanish community has hosted a one-day retreat on a Saturday, 8 a.m. - 3 p.m. to celebrate Pentecost. The retreat involves music of praise provided by the Spanish Choir Director, Angel Abarca and his group Eres Luz, biblical themes, discussion groups, breakfast, lunch and ends with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. Childcare is provided. Check the bulletin for information.

**ST. ELIZABETH OF THE TRINITY - OUR SPANISH COMMUNITY**