

Our Lady of Tahoe Catholic Church

Third Sunday in Ordinary Time



Pastor: Father Larry Morrison
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Office Manager: Susan Marschner
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Saturday: 5pm | Sunday: 10am

Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday: 11:30am

Confession: Wednesday at 11am or by appointment

**Baptisms and Marriages: Contact the parish during
business hours, M-F, 9am - 3pm or visit our website:**

www.ourladyoftahoe.org

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Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ourladyoftahoe>

Jesus' four new disciples lived in a tough world. Jewish aspirations for freedom confronted the grim reality of Roman imperial exploitation. Families lost their land. Children scattered in search of work and opportunity, often finding themselves enslaved by poverty. Traditional family and village structures crumbled under enormous cultural and economic stress. A very few people amassed incredible levels of wealth in Jesus' day, while countless others found themselves destitute. Those realities impinge upon Simon and Andrew while they fish; James and John sense them as they repair their nets. Some people abandon their nets because they hear good news deserving of our lives. If things were just fine in the world, perhaps they'd stay with their nets. But sensing God's kingdom drawing near, they reshape their lives in response to God's call. They drop everything and go another way. Far too few churches ask this question, this vocational question, of their members: to what life is God calling you? And far too many of us domesticate the question, as if Simon and his colleagues were just volunteering for a single night at the winter shelter. The realities of our world press us with questions greater than how we'll spend a given night. Meanwhile, the kingdom of God lies right at hand. And what about those nets?

One feast day that often slips by without notice is the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul. This miraculous event, which has been part of the Church calendar for more than 1,500 years, is an unmovable feast – that is, it is always on the same calendar date, Jan. 25. (Some years, the feast day falls on a Sunday, and because only a Solemnity or a feast of Our Lord can trump the Sunday liturgy, the feast of the Conversion of St. Paul is not always widely commemorated then.) But these calendar circumstances in no way diminish the importance of Paul's conversion, as he was among the greatest of the missionaries spreading the words of Jesus Christ. Further, he is an example that anyone, even the most hardened unbeliever or the vilest heretic, can be created anew by our loving Savior. Road to Damascus - Saul, which is Paul's given name, was born into a Jewish family in Tarsus (Turkey) around the year A.D. 8; he was also a Roman citizen, a fact that would play a large role later in his life. Schooled as a Pharisee, he was a tent maker by trade, but was most noted for his hatred of Christians. He believed the teachings of Jesus violated Mosaic Law and zealously harassed, and even jailed, anyone who followed those teachings. The first scriptural mention of Saul is found in Acts 7:58, as he is a bystander watching his fellow Jews stone St. Stephen to death. An aggressive persecutor of Christians in Jerusalem, Saul sought and received permission from the high priest to proceed to Damascus for the purpose of imprisoning more followers of Christ. Most Christians know the story of what happened on the Damascus road: the bright light that knocked Saul down, the voice of Jesus, Saul's blindness and immediate response to the calling of Christ. In the manner of the first Apostles who, when beckoned by Christ, gave up their lifestyles to follow him, Saul too doesn't hesitate. He says yes, just as the Blessed Mother said yes. Blinded from his encounter with Jesus, he allowed himself to be led into Damascus where he was baptized, after which he set out to spread the news of Jesus. Paul would repeat the story of his conversion again and again throughout his life, including to the different magistrates and kings who judged his activities. The book of Acts, in three places, tells the story of Saul's experience on the Damascus road. Impact of his conversion - Saul's sudden change confused those around him because he was known as one who hated Christians, who went about seeking them out to eliminate those individuals he genuinely considered as breaking Jewish law. Suddenly he was transformed from despising the followers of Jesus into fervently espousing the Gospel of that same Jesus. No one could have anticipated this conversion; it is one of the great miracles of mankind. After his baptism, Saul, who would be called Paul in the 13th chapter of Acts, went to the desert of Arabia to pray and contemplate his calling. He then returned to Damascus and into the synagogue, where he attested to the divinity of Jesus. While he had no Christian training, God infused words in his heart and in his mouth. The Jews in Damascus would eventually connive against him. The threat grew so severe that other Christians assisted Paul in an escape that included lowering him over the city walls in a basket. This was only the beginning of the threats and attacks on Paul. Henceforth, he was often regarded as a social undesirable, an agitator and a leader of a dangerous sect. From Damascus, he traveled to Jerusalem, where his reputation as a persecutor of Christians preceded him and Christians there were unsure and confounded by his appearance. Here he met and spent time with Peter, becoming even more determined to serve his Savior. At the Council of Jerusalem, in the year 49, Paul successfully argued against the widespread belief that non-Jews seeking to become Christians would first have to convert to Judaism, which means comply with Mosaic Law, be circumcised and observe all Jewish dietary customs. Because of Paul's persuasion, Christianity would become even more widespread. Like the most fervent convert, Paul simply couldn't get enough of Christ. With faith and courage inflamed by the Holy Spirit, Paul would spend the rest of his life going from country to country and town to town proclaiming Jesus as the Messiah, organizing and encouraging Christians to be resolute followers of Jesus, and nonbelievers to open their hearts to Christ, repent and be baptized. He would become known as the Apostle of the Gentiles (non-Jews) and his travels, letters and teaching changed the world. Often in trouble, Paul was confronted, jailed (though angels rescued him), physically abused and repeatedly endangered and harassed for preaching the message he previously attacked. Despite all the dangers he encountered, Paul never faltered or failed his God. In the end, he would be taken to Rome as a prisoner and be beheaded for his teachings. Why Paul? Why would Jesus select the likes of Paul? There were certainly other devoted followers of Jesus available in those early days of the Church – followers ready to give their lives to proclaim Jesus Christ as savior of the world. But Jesus picked and converted this Pharisee, known as Saul, saying, "This man is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before Gentiles, kings and Israelites" (Acts 9:15). God selected this man who had a strong hatred of all Jesus stands for, a man who went into the houses of Christians and "dragging out men and women," then "handed them over for imprisonment" (Acts 8:3). This man became God's chosen instrument to spread the message of Jesus across the Middle East and parts of Europe. Certainly, our Lord works in mysterious ways.



On January 22, 1973, the Supreme Court, in the Roe vs. Wade decision, made its worst mistake in history. By declaring that children in the womb are not "persons," it opened the door to tens of millions of abortions. Fortunately, that decision was reversed in 2022. Yet much work remains to be done to protect the unborn. The date of January 22 will always be a sad commemoration in American history. It should lead us to a deep repentance as a nation for ever having tolerated abortion. It should motivate us each day to speak up for the unborn, promote alternatives to abortion, and get involved in the pro-life movement.

Mass Intentions

Saturday	20	5pm	† Janice DeVille
Sunday	21	10am	Intentions of OLT Parishioners
Wednesday	24	11:30am	Healing for Mark Nadreau
Thursday	25	11:30am	† Bob Scagliotti
Friday	26	11:30am	† Deborah Sennello

Melinda Crawford
Pro Populo
Jack and Nancy Martinez
Julie Ryan
Patrick Sennello

2024 welcomes new officers to the Women's Guild here at Our Lady of Tahoe. All ladies of the parish are welcome to join us. Here is a list of recently elected and appointed members:

President: Kristie Grisafe
V/P: Liz Cordero
Treasurer: Mary Eaton
Secretary: Grace Connell
Publicity: Open
Spiritual Leader: Emily (Lee) De Pasquale
Scholarship/Foundation Liaison: Janis Brand
Altar Care/Linens: Liz Cordero
Gift Shop: Janis Brand
Pinecone Crosses: Lee De Pasquale



Last weekend's collection came to \$2,716.00. Donations are the financial lifeblood of the church. We ask that you continue this spirit of giving in not only your spiritual life but your personal and public lives as well, representing the enduring gifts of Jesus Christ. Thank you!

During the month of January, we celebrate the feast of the Mother of God and ask for her intercession to open the hearts and minds of all mothers who have had abortions. May they reach out for help to begin the healing process. Please find out more about us at <https://www.highdesertcatholic.org/>. Click on Our Works, scroll down, click on Project Rachel. Contact our confidential, non-judgmental help line 775-324-4325 or email KarenM@Catholicreno.org to take advantage of valuable resources.



Bible Study: We are continuing our journey through Acts. Our next session will be January 24, 2024 at 10am in the parish hall. All are welcome! Please join us even if you can only attend one session. For more information, please contact Janine Nyre at janinenyre@comcast.net or call 775-339-1961.



Please help yourself to a complimentary 2024 calendar courtesy of OLT's Women's Guild. They are on the tables in the back of the church. Also, for those of you who use offering envelopes, they are also on the tables in the back of the church.

As disciples of Jesus Christ, and in the name of Mary, Our Lady of Tahoe Catholic community welcomes and embraces all those who come to us. With guidance of the Holy Spirit, through worship, the sacraments, and loving service, we provide for one another's spiritual and material needs. In being so nourished, we reach out in faith to serve the larger community.



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