

Christi simus, non nostri. + We belong to Christ, not ourselves.



December 6, 2020—2nd Sunday of Advent

ST. COLUMBAN PARISH

506 First St. S, Yelm, WA 98597

Parish Office

360-458-3031

Hours: Monday—Thursday
9AM-12PM; 12:30-2PM

office@saintcolumbanyelm.org
www.saintcolumbanyelm.org

Mass Schedule

Sunday: 10:30AM

Saturday Vigil: 5:00PM

Daily Mass: Wednesdays 9:00AM
Rosary is said 30min prior to each Mass

Sacraments

Anointing of the Sick: By Appointment
Confession: Fridays 4:00—5:00PM

The church may be opened upon request during office hours for private prayer

Faith Formation

Offered Sundays before and after the
10:30AM Mass, depending on grade

RCIA: Tuesdays 6:30PM

Adult Education & Outreach

Contact the parish office for more information

Bible Study

Thursdays 6:30PM

Hispanic Prayer Group

Tuesdays 6:00PM

Rosary Prayer Group

Mondays 7:00PM

ST. PETER MISSION

149 Keithahn St. S, Tenino, WA 98589

Mission Office

360-264-2124

Hours: Wednesdays & Fridays
10:30AM – 2PM

gaby@saintcolumbanyelm.org

Mass Schedule

Sunday 8:00 AM

Rosary is said 30min prior to Mass

Sacraments

Confession: Sunday 7:30 -7:45AM

Anointing of the Sick: by Appt.

Adult Education & Outreach

Contact the mission office for more information

Bible Study Thursdays 9:00AM

MISSION STATEMENT - WE ARE A CATHOLIC FAITH COMMUNITY THAT SEEKS TO PLACE GOD FIRST, TO KNOW HIM, AND TO GROW IN HOLINESS TOGETHER. WE STRIVE TO LIVE THE GOSPEL THROUGH THE EUCHARIST, IN OUR TEACHING AND WAY OF LIFE.

For emergency assistance contact the Society of St. Vincent de Paul at 360-458-1904. Please leave your name, number, and details of your need.

Winter Clothes Closet Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 6:00PM—8:00PM

SAINT COLUMBAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

WELCOME! Please contact the office to register as a parishioner, for questions about any announcement, how to prepare for a sacrament, schedule a funeral or Mass Intention or to update your contact information.

PARISH OFFICE: (360) 458-3031

Fr. Dean Mbuzi, *Priest Administrator*
Ext.6 frdean@saintcolumbanyelm.org

Patricia Selsor, *Bookkeeper*
Ext.2 pat@saintcolumbanyelm.org

Katie Hennigan, *Faith Formation*
Ext. 3 katie@saintcolumbanyelm.org

Chad Lucero, *Youth Ministry & Confirmation*
Ext.4 chad@saintcolumbanyelm.org

Jennifer Langham, *Liturgy & Admin Support*
Ext. 5 jennifer@saintcolumbanyelm.org

Chris Bixby, *Director of Music*
chrisb@saintcolumbanyelm.org

Steven Slater, St. Columban *Custodian*
steven@saintcolumbanyelm.org

ST. PETER OFFICE: (360) 264-2124

Gaby Makinster, *St. Peter Admin*
gaby@saintcolumbanyelm.org



Mass Intentions

Pray for all those affected by Covid-19 and for first responders and caregivers.

December 9—Clint Johnson RIP

In Our Prayers

Loving God, we join with others of your people here asking you to hold in Your hands Mona Guffey, Joseph Waters, Oneida Blagg, Jess and Jessica Nash, Jodi Smith, Don Troyer, Ray Wilson, Paul Hennigan, June Byrd, Frances & Richard Sheriff, Bob Sundstrom, the Baletto Family and all those in harm's way.

Rest in Peace: Linda Azarella, Josh McCormick, Virginia Gaynor, Enedina Arenas

Financial Stewardship

St. Columban St. Peter

Weekly Goal	\$5,762	\$712
Nov. 22	\$2,664	\$485

From a sermon by Saint Anselm, Bishop

Virgin Mary, all nature is blessed by you

Blessed Lady, sky and stars, earth and rivers, day and night—everything that is subject to the power or use of man—rejoice that through you they are in some sense restored to their lost beauty and are endowed with inexpressible new grace. All creatures were dead, as it were, useless for men or for the praise of God, who made them. The world, contrary to its true destiny, was corrupted and tainted by the acts of men who served idols. Now all creation has been restored to life and rejoices that it is controlled and given splendor by men who believe in God. The universe rejoices with new and indefinable loveliness. Not only does it feel the unseen presence of God himself, its Creator, it sees him openly, working and making it holy. These great blessings spring from the blessed fruit of Mary's womb.

Through the fullness of the grace that was given you, dead things rejoice in their freedom, and those in heaven are glad to be made new. Through the Son who was the glorious fruit of your virgin womb, just souls who died before his life-giving death rejoice as they are freed from captivity, and the angels are glad at the restoration of their shattered domain.

Lady, full and overflowing with grace, all creation receives new life from your abundance. Virgin, blessed above all creatures, through your blessing all creation is blessed, not only creation from its Creator, but the Creator himself has been blessed by creation.

To Mary God gave his only-begotten Son, whom he loved as himself. Through Mary God made himself a Son, not different but the same, by nature Son of God and Son of Mary. The whole universe was created by God, and God was born of Mary. God created all things, and Mary gave birth to God. The God who made all things gave himself form through Mary, and thus he made his own creation. He who could create all things from nothing would not remake his ruined creation without Mary.

God, then, is the Father of the created world and Mary the mother of the re-created world. God is the Father by whom all things were given life, and Mary the mother through whom all things were given new life. For God begot the Son, through whom all things were made, and Mary gave birth to him as the Savior of the world. Without God's Son, nothing could exist; without Mary's Son, nothing could be redeemed.

Truly the Lord is with you, to whom the Lord granted that all nature should owe as much to you as to himself.

The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary is celebrated on December 8 and it is the Patronal Feast Day of the United States of America.

Pax et bonum,
Fr. Dean.

SAINT COLUMBAN PASTORAL COUNCIL

Judith Cusick (Chairperson),
Sheila Johnson, Jerome Didier,
Joseph Judge, Dennis Stumpf
office@saintcolumbanyelm.org

SAINT PETER ADVISORY COMMISSION

Sherry Bachmann (Chairperson),
Marilyn Ritter, Bernie Schwarz,
Bob Bacon, Diane Weston,
stpeteradvisory@saintcolumbanyelm.org

For daily Mass readings and Event Calendar please see our Monthly Insert, found in the narthex and on our website.

Faith Formation



December 8

Immaculate Conception Mass 7:00PM

All participants are encouraged to attend or watch via Livestream

The 2020-21 Faith Formation year has begun! It is not too late to join us for class.

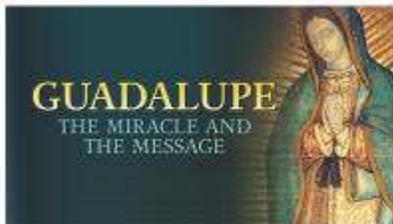
Contact Katie Hennigan in the Religious Education Office for more information.

katie@saintcolumbanvelm.org
360-458-3031x3

FORMED

PICK OF THE WEEK

December 6, 2020



GUADALUPE: THE MIRACLE AND THE MESSAGE

As we celebrate the patroness of the Americas this week, enjoy this film narrated by Jim Caviezel that walks us through our Mother's miraculous appearance to Juan Diego—an encounter that has converted millions.

To set up your free account visit formed.org/signup and select our parish.



Sacrament of Baptism

All those who wish to baptize their child or be a godparent for a child to be baptized here at St. Columban must complete the Baptism Preparation before a baptism can be scheduled. Please contact Katie Hennigan in the Religious Education Office for more information.

katie@saintcolumbanvelm.org
360-458-3031x3

All Masses will resume with modifications, see below for details

MASS RESERVATIONS

In obedience to the COVID Safety Guidelines from the Archdiocese, public Mass at our parish has resumed with the following safety measures in place.

- ♦ Masks will be required. Those with a medical exemption will be seated according to Archdiocesan guidelines.
- ♦ Attendance will be limited to 90 people per Mass at St. Columban and 40 people per Mass at St. Peter.
- ♦ The cry room at St. Columban is limited to one family per Mass and will be reserved on a first come-first served basis.

Reservations at St. Columban: call the parish office at 360-458-3031 ext. 5

Reservations at St. Peter: call the mission office at 360-264-2124

If you are unable to call during office hours, please leave your name, phone number, and how many will be in your party and we will call you back to confirm your reservation.

Please note that leaving a voicemail does not confirm your reservation

Important Things to Remember

- ♦ Only persons who are under the same reservation will be seated together.
- ♦ Please arrive at least 20 minutes early for Mass. You will be checked in by a Greeter and then seated by an Usher.
- ♦ We recommend you bring your own missal with you for the readings as they will not be provided.

Reservations for Christmas Eve & Christmas Day Masses are now open!

Bonus Bulletin Content!

To save on printing, some extra bulletin content will now be exclusively found in the online edition of our bulletin, which is also emailed weekly to parishioners.

Sign up at flocknote.com/saintcolumbanvelm or visit our website saintcolumbanvelm.org



Women's Club

Coffee Hour and all other events suspended until further notice.



Knights of Columbus

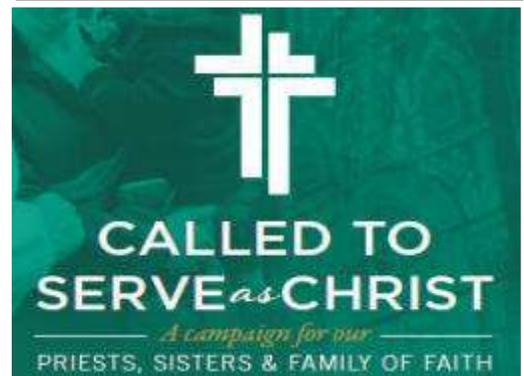
No events currently scheduled



December 8— Immaculate Conception
9:00AM Mass at St. Peter
7:00PM Mass at St. Columban

December 20— Cleaning & Decorating the Church for Christmas after Mass

December 24—CHRISTMAS EVE
5:00PM Children's Mass
8:00PM Mass w/Incense



3 Year Goal for St. Columban: \$307, 368

As of: November 24, 2020

Total Pledged: \$107,254 35% of Goal

Number of Families Participating: 292
Potential Share: \$16,088

3 Year Goal for St. Peter: \$54,327

As of: November 24, 2020

Total Pledged: \$21,817 40% of Goal

Number of Families Participating: 45
Potential Share: \$3,273

Thank You for Pledging Your Support!

Prepare the Way of the Lord!



The readings in today's Mass remind us that we are preparing for the coming of Jesus. The first reading says, "A voice cries out in the desert, 'Prepare the way of the Lord!'" Saint Paul, in the second reading, tells us to conduct ourselves in holiness and devotion, waiting for the day of the Lord.

In the Gospel reading we hear about Saint John the Baptist preparing the people for the coming of Christ.

What can we do to prepare for the coming of Jesus, which we remember especially at Christmas?

First, we should try to be holy like Saint Paul says. We should pray and do good. Then, we should make sure that we have repented of all our

sins, like Saint John the Baptist taught the people. Finally, we should tell people about Jesus! The first reading tells us, "Fear not to cry out and say to the cities of Judah: Here is your God!"



Answers to Cross-word: Across: 1. she 5. saw 7. immaculate 10. over 11. preserve 15. pure 17. man 18. lamb 20. ready 22. am 23. original Down: 2. him 3. you 4. hate 5. save 6. were 8. Mary 9. love 12. soul 13. baby 14. Adam 16. Eve 18. laws 19. born 21. Anne

www.thekidsbulletin.com

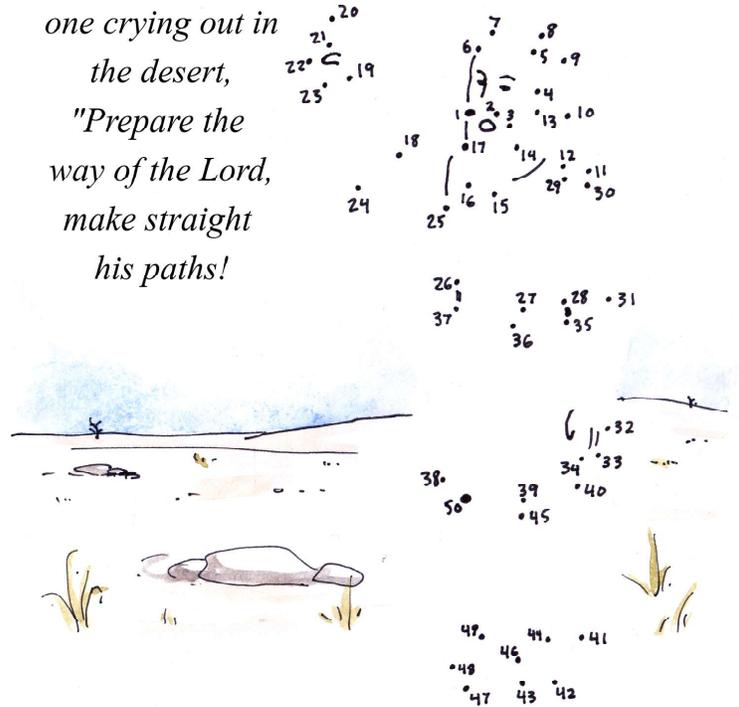
YOU'RE BEING
SUCH A GOOD
HELPER!



The Kids' Bulletin

Second Sunday of Advent
December 6th, 2020

*I am the voice of
one crying out in
the desert,
"Prepare the
way of the Lord,
make straight
his paths!"*

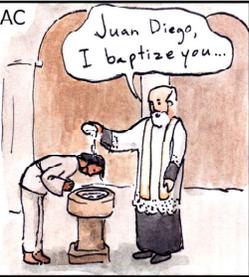


*What did God send before Jesus to prepare the
people for His coming?
Connect the dots to find out!*

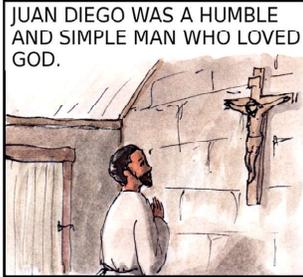
SAINT JUAN DIEGO

DECEMBER 9

CUAUHTLATOHUAC WAS A NATIVE OF MEXICO, BORN IN THE 1400'S. WHEN HE BECAME A CHRISTIAN, HE TOOK THE NAME JUAN DIEGO, WHICH IS 'JOHN JAMES' IN ENGLISH.



JUAN DIEGO WAS A HUMBLE AND SIMPLE MAN WHO LOVED GOD.



HE WAS ON HIS WAY TO MASS WHEN OUR LADY APPEARED TO HIM.



She wants a church built there.



HE WAS SUPPOSED TO MEET HER AGAIN, BUT HIS UNCLE WAS SICK...



THEN HE SAW SPANISH ROSES GROWING THERE- IN THE MIDDLE OF WINTER!



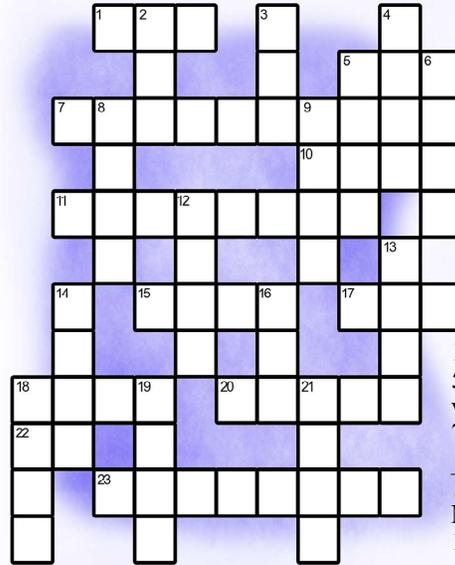
WHEN HE SHOWED THE FLOWERS IN HIS TILMA TO THE BISHOP, A PICTURE OF OUR LADY APPEARED ON IT. THE BISHOP BELIEVED HIM THEN AND HAD THE CHURCH BUILT.



SAINT JUAN DIEGO LIVED A LONG AND SIMPLE LIFE TEACHING THE FAITH. MARY CHOSE HIM, BECAUSE HE WAS HUMBLE, TO BRING HER MESSAGE TO THE CHURCH AT THAT TIME. WHEN THE NEW CHURCH WAS BUILT, MILLIONS OF THE PAGAN PEOPLE IN MEXICO BECAME CHRISTIANS. JUAN DIEGO DIED AT AGE 74.

THEKIDSBULLETIN@GMAIL.COM

Immaculate Conception Cross-Word



Fill in the blanks to do this puzzle about Our Lady.

ACROSS:

1. _____ was without sin.
 5. God _____ that Mary would do His will.
 7. She was the _____ Conception.
 10. God watched _____ Mary.
 11. God decided to _____ her from sin.
 15. Mary's soul was not stained- it was _____.
 17. God's Son become _____.
 18. He is called the _____ of God.
 20. When the time was _____, the angel came to Mary.
 22. She said, "I _____ the handmaid of the Lord.
 23. She had no _____ sin, so she was always ready to obey.
- DOWN:
2. Whatever God wanted she would do for _____.
 3. She brought the Saviour into the world for _____ and me.
 4. She teaches us to love God and _____ sin, which offends Him.
 5. God had decided to _____ Mary from all sin.
 6. If you _____ God, how would you make your mother?
 8. The name of God's mother is _____.
 9. She did every single thing out of _____ for God.
 12. He had preserved her _____ from every stain of sin.
 13. Before she was even a little _____ she was chosen by God.
 14. We all have original sin because of _____ ...
 16. ... and his wife, _____, who committed the first sins.
 18. They had chosen to disobey God's _____.
 19. Since then, every other person* was _____ with original sin.
 21. Mary was the daughter of the holy saints, _____ and Joachim.

* Except Saint John the Baptist, who, according to tradition, was freed from original sin - filled with the Holy Spirit' when his mother was greeted by Mary who was expecting Jesus.

ARCHDIOCESE OF SEATTLE

At Home with Faith

It may be challenging to embrace the season of Advent because of the many challenges we have faced this year. Still, Jesus is coming. Let us remember to prepare, but also to rejoice.



The readings for this second Sunday of Advent remind us that Advent is a time of preparation. We hear the prophet Isaiah foretell about a prophet who will prepare a way for the Lord into our hearts, and the psalm promises a time of kindness, truth, peace and justice.

When John the Baptist arrives, he doesn't draw attention to himself. Instead, he shifts the spotlight to Jesus, yet to come, but promised by God's word. That's our job as parents too: to direct our children's hearts and minds to Jesus.

Read

Take time to read and reflect on the Scriptures for this day.

Don't have access to a Bible?

Visit www.usccb.org/bible/readings or download an app such as *Laudate* or *iBreviary* to access the Mass readings.

Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-10

A voice cries out in the wilderness, make straight a path for God.

Psalms 85:9-10-11-12, 13-14

Kindness and truth shall meet; justice and peace shall kiss.

2 Peter 3:8-14

Be found righteous when the Lord comes.

Mark 1:1-8

One mightier than me is coming, he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.

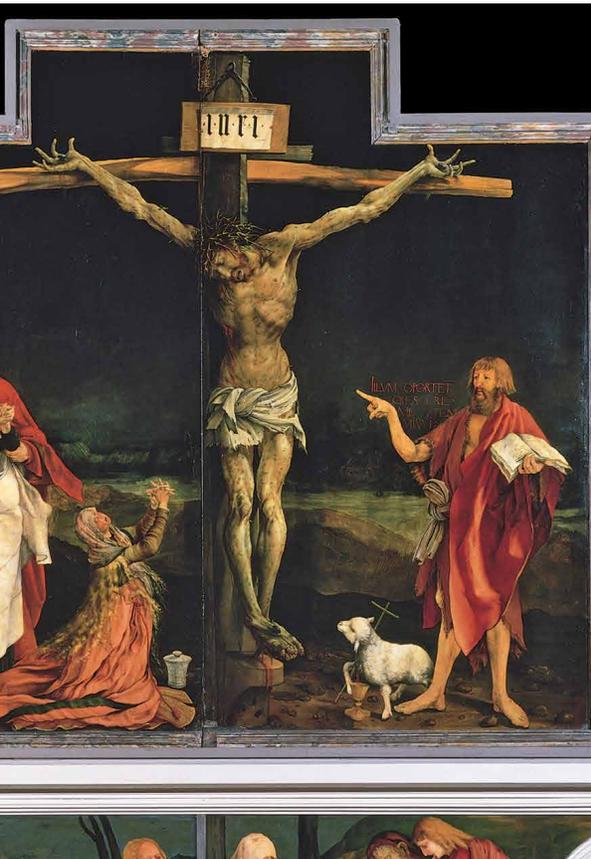
At Home with Faith

Talk

Here are some reflection questions to help you have **Great Conversations** with the whole family.

Isaiah tells us to make a pathway for God by lowering the mountains and raising the valleys in our hearts. Here are some ways to help our children do this.

- **Lower the mountains that might block the way for Jesus into our hearts.** This means that we need to get rid of pride, an attitude that suggests that we are just fine how we are and don't need God. When we refuse to acknowledge that we need God, we are missing what we really need to be happy.
- **Raise the valleys that make us think that we aren't good enough for God's love.** If we have done things we really regret or if we are embarrassed about some things we've done, that doesn't mean that we are bad. It's just a reminder that we need God and it's all the more reason to invite Jesus into our hearts. Tell your children that you love them no matter what, and so does God!
- **Teach them the Jesus prayer.** This simple and ancient prayer has helped many people welcome Jesus into their heart: "Lord Jesus, son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner."



The Isenheim altarpiece, one of the world's most compelling works of art, includes a portrait of John the Baptist pointing to Jesus on the Cross with this quote from John 3:30, "He must increase, I must decrease."

As parents, we need to make these words of the Baptist our own.

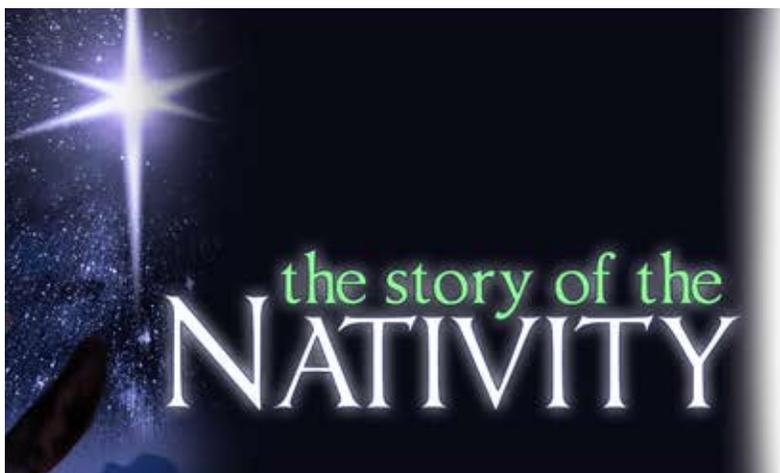
When our children are young, they act as if their parents know almost everything. Later, as teenagers, the opposite is true. In either case, our job as parents is to point to Jesus and tell our children "He must increase, I must decrease." The more our children welcome Jesus into their hearts, the more room in their hearts they will have for us.

Here are some ways to make Advent a time of welcoming Jesus:

- Learn more about Jesus as a family.
- Participate in the sacraments. (Virtual Mass counts!)
- Tell your children that when they tell the truth and show kindness, they are opening their hearts to Jesus.
- Pray! Talk to Jesus and listen. [Click this link](#) to find resources.

For more resources, visit us online at:

<https://marriagefamilylife.seattlarchdiocese.org/athomewithfaith>



THE STORY OF THE NATIVITY: THE TRUTH OF CHRISTMAS

Enjoy this fast-paced, thought-provoking look at the true story of the Nativity as we enter into the joyful season of Advent.

WATCH

LEARN

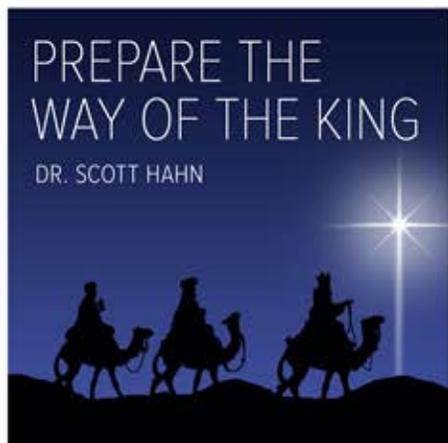
ADVENT

This Advent prepare your heart through this exploration of the mystery of the Incarnation, the Virgin Birth, and the events surrounding the arrival of Jesus Christ.



PREPARE THE WAY OF THE KING BY DR. SCOTT HAHN

Your Advent journey will take on new meaning with Dr. Scott Hahn's illuminating presentation on the greatest gift ever given to mankind—Jesus Christ.



LISTEN

Our parish has a FORMED subscription.
To set up your free account visit formed.org/signup and select our parish.

The Second Sunday of Advent

DECEMBER 6, 2020

The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

On Tuesday, December 8th, we celebrate the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

An essential part of God's plan for the mother of his Son was that she be conceived free from Original Sin. "Through the centuries the Church became ever more aware that Mary, 'full of grace' through God, was redeemed from the moment of her conception" (CCC, no. 491).

In anticipation that she was to bear the Son of God, Mary was preserved from the time of her conception from Original Sin.

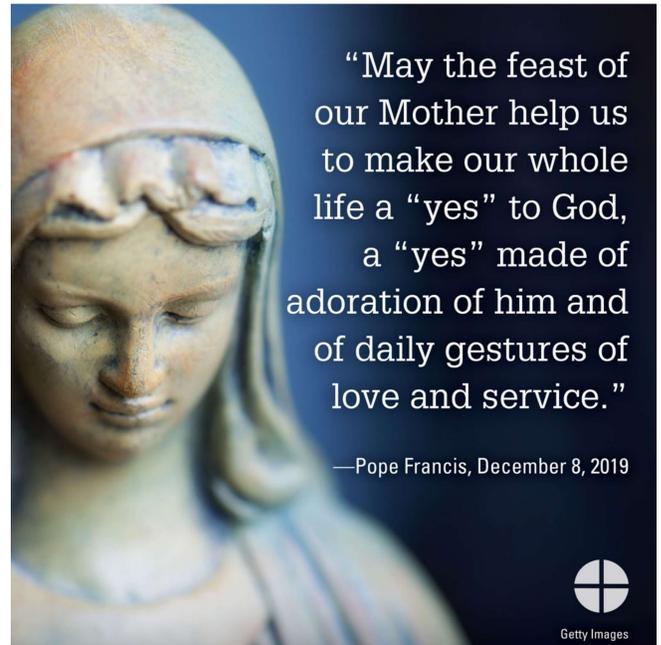
We call this the Immaculate Conception. No sin would touch her, so that she would be a fitting and worthy vessel of the Son of God. The Immaculate Conception does not refer to the virginal conception and birth of Christ, but rather to Mary's being conceived without inheriting Original Sin.

In the course of time, the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception became more precisely enunciated, as its truth—long supported by the universal popular devotion of the faithful—was better understood by deepening theological inquiry.

In 1854, Pope Pius IX proclaimed this dogma infallibly: that is, in his role as supreme teacher of the Church, he declared that this doctrine is divinely revealed and must be accepted with faith by the entire Church.

MEMORARE

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to your protection, implored your help or sought your intercession was left unaided. Inspired with this confidence, we fly unto you, O Virgin of Virgins, our Mother. To you we come. Before you we kneel, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not our petitions, but in your clemency, hear and answer them. Amen.—St. Bernard of Clairvaux



“May the feast of our Mother help us to make our whole life a “yes” to God, a “yes” made of adoration of him and of daily gestures of love and service.”

—Pope Francis, December 8, 2019



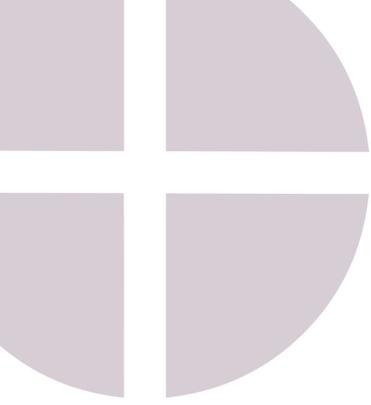
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Catholic
Current

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BULLETIN



Saint Ambrose

Bishop and Doctor of the Church

DATES: 340-397

FEAST DAY: DECEMBER 7

The son of a Roman official in Gaul, Ambrose was practicing law in Rome when the emperor appointed him governor of the province whose capital was Milan. When that church see became vacant, Ambrose was chosen bishop by acclamation. A catechumen like many of his people, Ambrose was baptized, ordained and consecrated bishop on the same day, Dec. 7, 374. He battled paganism and the Arian heresy, publicly challenged rulers in the Western and Eastern empires, championed hymns as a form of praise, wrote theological treatises and was beloved by his people for his generosity and accessibility. He also baptized St. Augustine of Hippo. One of the four doctors of the Latin church, Ambrose is the patron of bees, stonemasons and catechumens.



CNS Photo



Catholic
Current

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SAINT OF THE WEEK





DECEMBER 6, 2020

2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT



“Prepare the way of the Lord.” - Mk 1:3

WEEKLY PRAYER

READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 13, 2020

- SUN 12/6** Is 40:1-5, 9-11/Ps 85:9-10, 11-12, 13-14 [8]/2 Pt 3:8-14/Mk 1:1-8
- MON 12/7** Is 35:1-10/Ps 85:9ab and 10, 11-12, 13-14 [Is 35:4f]/Lk 5:17-26
- TUE 12/8** Gn 3:9-15, 20/Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4 [1]/Eph 1:3-6, 11-12/Lk 1:26-38
- WED 12/9** Is 40:25-31/Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 8 and 10 [1]/Mt 11:28-30
- THR 12/10** Is 41:13-20/Ps 145:1 and 9, 10-11, 12-13ab [8]/Mt 11:11-15
- FRI 12/11** Is 48:17-19/Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6 [cf. Jn 8:12]/Mt 11:16-19
- SAT 12/12** Zec 2:14-17 or Rv 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab/Jdt 13:18bcde, 19 [15:9d]/
- SUN 12/13** Is 61:1-2a, 10-11/Lk 1:46-48, 49-50, 51-54 [Is 61:10b]/1 Thes 5:16-24/Jn 1:6-8, 19-28

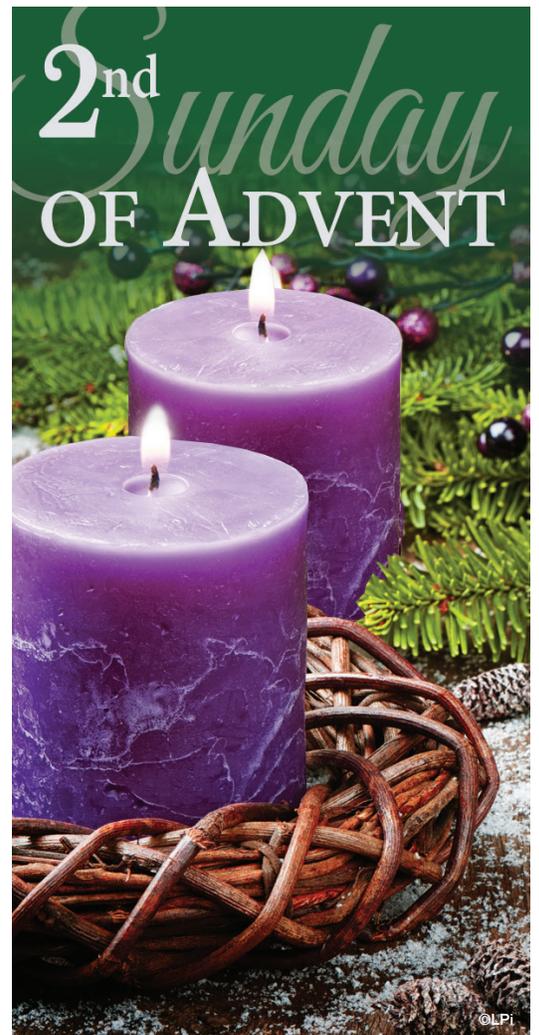
OBSERVANCES FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 6, 2020

- Sunday:** 2nd Sunday of Advent
- Monday:** St. Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor of the Church
- Tuesday:** The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- Wednesday:** St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatotzin
- Friday:** St. Damasus I, Pope
- Saturday:** Our Lady of Guadalupe
- Next Sunday:** 3rd Sunday of Advent

LIVE THE LITURGY

Inspiration for the week

Prepare the way of the Lord! The message of John the Baptist becomes the calling of every baptized disciple of Jesus Christ. Each one of us is asked to prepare the way of the Lord. Given the humble means of our lives, how can we do this? It certainly does not require that we stand on street corners announcing God's future coming! We can more readily take up the task of our lifework by clearing our lives of unnecessary, distracting clutter. By creating solid and deep spiritual lives, we can heighten our awareness of God's presence and help people point to and discover God's presence around them. By conducting ourselves in holiness and devotion, we can speak volumes to those we meet. Not by preaching actual words, but by living lives that communicate the comfort God wants His people to know. As the world sometimes frantically unfolds around us, we can be people of patience who show others that it's okay to wait for God's gift to come. Conducting our lives in this manner, we will know the peace that comes from doing what we have been asked to do.



Quiet
your
heart.

WORSHIP & MEDITATION



FIRST READING:

A voice cries out:
In the desert prepare the way of the LORD!
Make straight in the wasteland a highway
for our God! (Is 40:3)



PSALM:

Lord, let us see your kindness,
and grant us your salvation. (Ps 85)



SECOND READING:

The day of the Lord will come like a thief,
and then the heavens will pass away with a mighty roar
and the elements will be dissolved by fire,
and the earth and everything done on it will be
found out. (2 Pt 3:10)



GOSPEL:

“One mightier than I is coming after me.
I am not worthy to stoop and loosen the
thongs of his sandals.
I have baptized you with water;
he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.” (Mk 1:7b-8)

*Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001,
1998, 1970 CCD. The English translation of Psalm
Responses from Lectionary for Mass © 1969, 1981,
1997, International Commission on English in the
Liturgy Corporation. All rights reserved.*



GOSPEL MEDITATION

Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

People knew over a year in advance that the Pope was coming for a visit to America and the preparations began. Security, space limitations and requirements, protocols, crowd management, itineraries, invitations, regulations, and so much more was necessary to pull this event off effectively. It's not every day that we get a visit from such a prominent dignitary. Thought, effort, meticulous attention to detail and vision all are necessary to make this thing work. After all, he can't just show up in the ordinary and normal daily routines of life and catch people unprepared! Tickets have to be purchased, buses rented, hotel rooms reserved, and travel arrangements made early because it will be impossible to see him if we wait too long!

We do this kind of preparing not only for prominent religious figures but for political dignitaries, notable sports figures, people of fame, and even actors. If an individual intrigues us, we are going to want to do all we have to do to get a “good seat” in the house. Does Jesus Christ captivate this much of our attention? We are asked to prepare the way of the Lord and to do so not with frantic frenzy but patient enthusiasm. We do not have to stand on a street corner making profound announcements about God's coming or become overly zealous in our embrace of the Good News. Our task is quieter, more interior, captivating, and consuming. We are asked to change. We have to conduct our lives with holy devotion.

Is the cost of that ticket too much for you? Don't you want the “best seat” in the house? You don't want to miss Our Lord's arrival when he comes, do you? After all, if he comes while you are going about your daily routines without you even knowing, he may catch you off guard. Or, he may come in disguise looking like a beggar, a prisoner, migrant, refugee, or someone who is lost. Would you be ready to recognize him then? Preparing for the coming of Christ requires a change of mind, heart, and behavior. It is not adequate to simply do the things we always do. We want our lives to speak of the exciting news of Christ's coming and the joy that the Gospel brings. It has to do with our demeanor, values, priorities, choices, and how we structure daily routines. Of course, it involves sacrifice. All anticipations do! Are you excited, captivated, enthusiastic, and sitting on the edge of your seat eager to celebrate his coming among us at Christmas, and waiting for him to come again? If not, why not?

LITURGICAL LIFE

RESPONDING *to the Call*

EVERYDAY STEWARDSHIP

Recognize God In Your Ordinary Moments

Jubilation to Share

Sometimes you have something to share with people that causes you to well up inside with excitement to the point of going crazy. A pregnancy test, a pay raise, a college acceptance, a wedding or engagement are all examples of moments in life when we might be bursting at the seams to tell somebody the good news. When we finally get the chance to tell somebody, joy just seems to flow through us with ease. We literally want the entire world to share in our jubilation.

When was the last time you shared with a friend or loved one how much your faith in Jesus means to you? You don't feel the same motivation to share? Are you not overwhelmed with a desire to spread the Good News?

Don't feel bad. You are not alone. As Christians, we often fail to grasp the powerful implications of being a disciple of Jesus Christ. We can become complacent and lose sight of what matters the most. That is when sharing with others about our faith seems uncomfortable.

Faith is a gift. As everyday stewards we are called to share with others what God has given us. Advent is a great time to grow in our faith and love of the Lord. The more we cultivate our faith and the closer we draw to Him, the more we will want to share about Him. We might not have the impact of John the Baptist in the course of human history, but our proclamation of the Gospel to another might be the gift that changes their history.

— Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

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WHY DO WE DO THAT?

Catholic Life Explained:

Cremation and The Church

Question:

Can a divorced Catholic receive holy Communion?

Answer:

Unfortunately, too many people today — Catholics and non-Catholics alike — mistakenly believe that divorce separates one from the Communion of the Church and that divorced persons may not receive Communion. However, as the Church has communicated in a number of places, the issue at hand is not the reality of divorce, but is more often the reality of re-marriage outside of the Church (such as in the case of a Catholic who was previously married within the Church, divorced, and remarried without receiving an annulment).

Divorced persons are called to live chastely as single people and to observe the same call to avoid sin as anyone else who desires to receive the Eucharist. Beyond this, however, Pope Francis has reminded us that the healing power of the Eucharist can be especially significant for those who have “endured separation, divorce, or abandonment ... divorced people who have not remarried, and often bear witness to marital fidelity, ought to be encouraged to find in the Eucharist the nourishment they need to sustain them in their present state of life.” (Amoris Laetitia, no. 242) Moreover, he continues, “The local community and pastors should accompany these people with solicitude, particularly when children are involved or when they are in serious financial difficulty.” (AL, no 242)

As Pope Francis has also reminded us, the Eucharist is “not a prize for the perfect,” but “a powerful medicine and nourishment” (Evangelii Gaudium, no. 47). Because we all stand in need of healing and wholeness, the Church invites all who seek to live their faith in integrity and devotion to come and receive the grace offered in the Eucharist.

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*Behold, I am sending my
messenger ahead of you;*

he will prepare your way.

*A voice of one crying out in
the desert:*

*“Prepare the way of the
Lord,*

make straight his paths.”

- Mk 1:2b-3

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass
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QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK

Invite Parishioners to Reflect and Respond to Scripture

First Reading:

Five hundred years before the birth of Christ, Isaiah prophesied these words of comfort and hope to the Israelites captive in Babylon. What would bring comfort and hope to you in this season of Advent?

Second Reading:

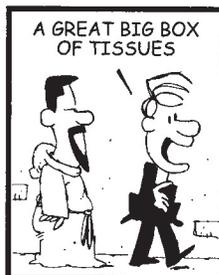
Today we hear how Peter challenged those in his day who denied that Christ would return. Peter argued that our human timeline is not God's timeline. How do you reason with people today who deny the fundamentals of our faith?

Gospel:

Mark opens his Gospel by presenting the words and activities of John the Baptist in the context of fulfilling Isaiah's prophecy heard in our first reading. Why do you think connecting Isaiah to John the Baptist was important to Mark and his community?



2ND SUNDAY OF ADVENT



LITURGICAL LIFE

3 EASY STEPS

To Keeping Yourself & Others Healthy!

We are cautioned to be especially careful during the Coronavirus outbreak. Here are some simple ways to keep sickness away.



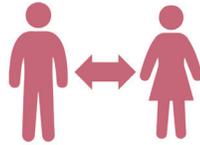
Wash Your Hands

Wash your hands for at least 20 seconds using soap and water. If you can't wash your hands, use hand sanitizer frequently.



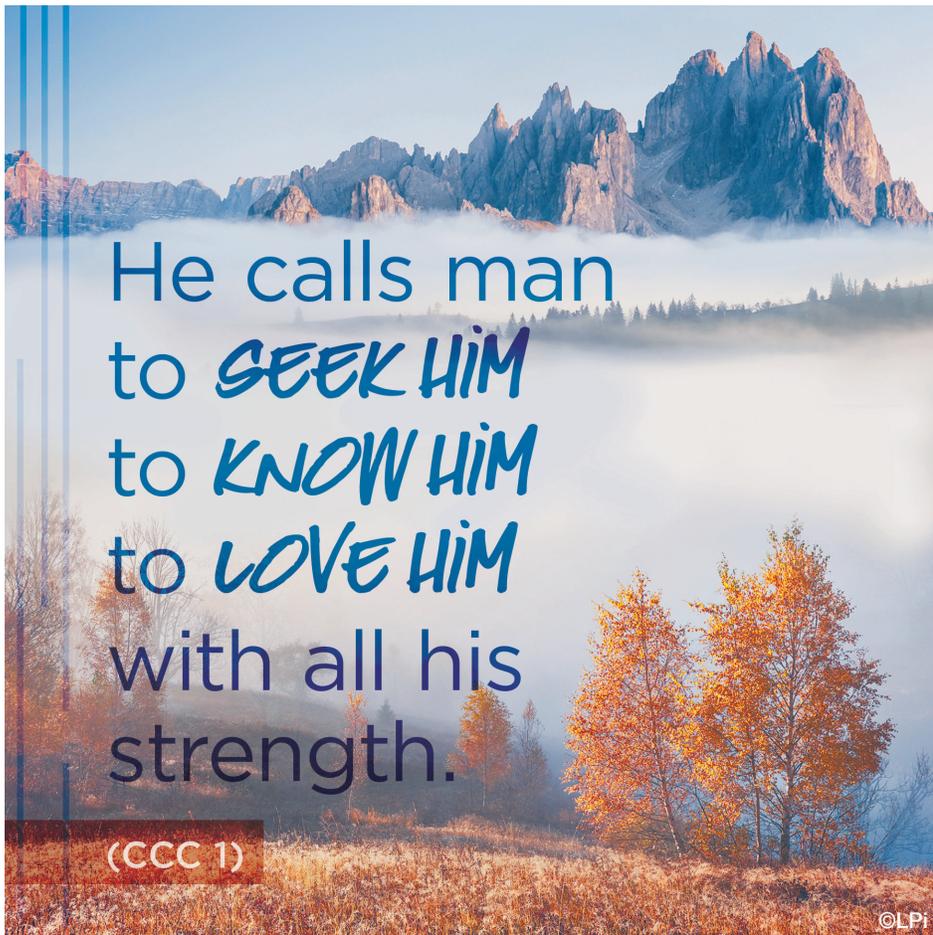
Don't Touch Your Face

Especially around the eyes, nose and mouth. If you must sneeze, use a tissue or your arm.



Keep Your Distance

Practice social distancing during this epidemic and stay away from large groups. Instead, call, email or check up on family and friends using social media.



*John the Baptist
appeared in the
desert proclaiming
a baptism of
repentance for the
forgiveness of sins.
John was clothed
in camel's hair,
with a leather belt
around his waist.
He fed on locusts
and wild honey.
And this is what he
proclaimed: "One
mightier than I is
coming after me."
- Mk 1:4, 6-7a*

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass
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KIDS CORNER

READ THE
GOSPEL AND
COLOR THE
PICTURE.

SHARING THE GOSPEL

John the Baptist had an important message. When you make sinful mistakes, and when you turn away from God, stop. Learn from your mistakes, and do things God's way. Were you bossy or rude? Be thoughtful and kind. Did you tell a lie? Be honest instead. God wants you to share his love with other people.

PRAYER

Jesus, help me to learn from my mistakes. Thank you for forgiving me.

MISSION FOR THE WEEK

Ask your family if you have hurt their feelings. Ask them to forgive you.





A PERFECT GIFT

Our love for our children has nothing to do with their abilities. We love them simply because of who they are.

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Soon after the birth of my son Charlie, who has Down syndrome, a visitor asked whether he was “mild, moderate, or severe”—referring to his level of cognitive impairment. I knew the terminology, but the question shocked me. In my arms I held my beautiful baby boy, who defied easy categorization. Clinical labels may describe some aspects of an individual’s “functioning,” but they don’t tell the whole story. Labels could not describe how Charlie’s smile lit up a room or how the sweetness of his soul had captured our hearts so completely.*

* Relationship Changes Everything

I have since come to understand that clinical categories also miss another important dimension of personhood: we are created to be in relationship with others. As Pope Saint John Paul II said in his encyclical *Evangelium vitae* (*The Gospel of Life*), “Within the family each member is accepted, respected and honoured precisely because he or she is a person; and if any family member is in greater need, the care which he or she receives is all the more intense and attentive.”¹

Charlie does well because we love him and attend to him out of that love. We make accommodations to compensate for the challenges that arise, and his strengths become more apparent. He plays an integral role in our family’s happiness. For example, he is our most empathetic child—the first to notice and offer comfort when we are hurt.

People often say, “I could never handle a child with a disability.” But the beauty of parenting is that you aren’t given *a* child with a disability. You are given *your* child with a disability. Your child enters the world in a relationship with you, and that changes everything. You are not called to “handle” a disability. You are called to love a particular person, and caring for him or her grows out of that love. The challenges that come with his diagnosis make up only a small part of life with our wonderful little boy.

* Stained Glass

I once read an article in which a woman discussed the reasons for aborting her child with Down syndrome. The deal-breaker was watching a boy with Down syndrome at a restaurant with his parents: they had to hand-feed him a slice of pizza and wipe his face with a napkin.

This hit home for me. We weaned Charlie off a feeding tube when he was seven, spoon-feeding him and often wiping his face afterwards. I wonder how many people saw us and decided a life like his isn’t worth living. Had anyone asked, I would have said, “It might look a little crazy from the outside, but he’s an amazing little boy, and it’s a good life.”

It's like looking at a stained-glass window from the outside: the colors look dark, and you can't quite make out the figures. From the inside, however, with the sun shining through it, the effect can be brilliant. From inside our family, love illuminates our life with Charlie. What may seem dreary to others, perhaps even unbearable, is actually filled with beauty and color. We know, for instance, that Charlie worked hard to gain basic feeding skills that most people take for granted, and we are so proud of his valiant efforts.



✧ Perfection

Many parents want perfect children, and our culture is obsessed with superficial perfection. Photos are airbrushed, and social media depicts seemingly perfect lives. However, God calls us to seek perfection not in appearance or abilities, but in love.

Christians know what perfect love looks like—Jesus offering himself on the Cross. Love in a family where one member has a serious disability may look unappealing from the outside. Indeed, love in *any* family is messy; there are faces to wipe and sacrifices to make. It's natural to fear that such sacrifices will require too much, but this is where the deep mystery of sacrificial love becomes apparent.

In our family, we have found that our hearts, rather than being weighed down, have become larger. Caring for Charlie has given us more patience, more compassion, and more love for others—especially those on the outskirts of society, whom Pope Francis so often calls us to care for.

✧ A Fundamental Truth

Perhaps this is why so many families of children with disabilities, despite difficulties, often radiate joy. When I meet another parent of a child with Down syndrome, there is usually a moment of instant recognition and understanding. Our eyes meet, and we smile conspiratorially, as if we're in on the same secret: the fundamental truth that every life is a good and perfect gift.

Many know this on an intellectual level, but those who love someone with a disability see it in their loved one's face in a particular way. Our love for our children has nothing to do with their abilities. We love them simply because of who they *are*, and understanding this teaches us how to truly love everyone. We also begin to understand our own worth, which depends not on our skills or appearance, but solely on the fact that we are created in the image and likeness of God and loved by Him. Our lives—*all* our lives—are worth living.

*Name changed for privacy.

**The author has a Ph.D. in developmental psychology and has been advocating since the birth of her son Charlie* for children who are prenatally diagnosed with disabilities.

¹ Pope St. John Paul II, *Evangelium vitae* (*The Gospel of Life*) (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1995), no. 92.

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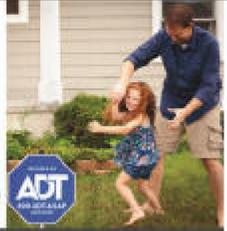
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