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

December 20, 2020—4th 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
parishoffice@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

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

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

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 10:00AM

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, Ext.6 — *Priest Administrator* — frdean@saintcolumbanyelm.org

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

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

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

Jennifer Langham Ext. 5 — *Liturgy & Admin Support* — 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

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www.saintcolumbanyelm.org

Mass Intentions

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

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, Hanna McDonald, Cecilia Edgerton, Bob Sundstrom, the Baleto Family and all those in harm's way.

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

Financial Stewardship

	St. Columban	St. Peter
Weekly Goal	$5,762	$712
Nov. 22nd	$2,664	$485

From a sermon by Saint Leo the Great, Pope

Christian, remember your dignity

Dearly beloved, today our Savior is born; let us rejoice. Sadness should have no place on the birthday of life. The fear of death has been swallowed up; life brings us joy with the promise of eternal happiness.

No one is shut out from this joy; all share the same reason for rejoicing. Our Lord, victor over sin and death, finding no man free from sin, came to free us all. Let the saint rejoice as he sees the palm of victory at hand. Let the sinner be glad as he receives the offer of forgiveness. Let the pagan take courage as he is summoned to life.

In the fullness of time, chosen in the unfathomable depths of God's wisdom, the Son of God took for himself our common humanity in order to reconcile it with its creator. He came to overthrow the devil, the origin of death, in that very nature by which he had overthrown mankind.

And so at the birth of our Lord the angels sing in joy: *Glory to God in the highest*, and they proclaim *peace to his people on earth* as they see the heavenly Jerusalem being built from all the nations of the world. When the angels on high are so exultant at this marvelous work of God's goodness, what joy should it not bring to the lowly hearts of men?

Beloved, let us give thanks to God the Father, through his Son, in the Holy Spirit, because in his great love for us he took pity on us, *and when we were dead in our sins he brought us to life with Christ,* so that in him we might be a new creation. Let us throw off our old nature and all its ways and, as we have come to birth in Christ, let us renounce the works of the flesh.

Christian, remember your dignity, and now that you share in God's own nature, do not return by sin to your former base condition. Bear in mind who is your head and of whose body you are a member. Do not forget that you have been rescued from the power of darkness and brought into the light of God's kingdom.

Through the sacrament of baptism you have become a temple of the Holy Spirit. Do not drive away so great a guest by evil conduct and become again a slave to the devil, for your liberty was bought by the blood of Christ.

Pax et bonum,
Fr. Dean.

SAINT COLUMBAN PASTORAL COUNCIL

Judith Cusick (Chairperson), Sheila Johnson, Jerome Didier, Joseph Judge, Dennis Stumpf

parishoffice@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

No Class December 22nd
Have a Merry Christmas!

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@saintcolumbanyelm.org
360-458-3031x3

FORMED
PICK OF THE WEEK
December 20, 2020

CHRISTMAS IN ROME: A CELEBRATION OF THE NATIVITY
Nowhere celebrates the birth of the Savior like Rome. This Christmas, marvel at the Holy City's festive celebration of the coming of the child Jesus in Bethlehem.

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@saintcolumbanyelm.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/saintcolumbanyelm or visit our website saintcolumbanyelm.org

Women's Club
Coffee Hour and all other events suspended until further notice.

Knights of Columbus
No events currently scheduled

December 24	**CHRISTMAS EVE**
5:00PM	Children's Mass
8:00PM	Mass w/Incense
December 25	**CHRISTMAS DAY**
8:00AM	Mass at St. Peter
10:30AM	Mass at St. Columban
January 1	**MARY, MOTHER OF GOD**
9:00AM	Mass at St. Peter
7:00PM	Mass at St. Columban

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!

Thanks to our advertisers listed on the back of this bulletin! They make this publication available to the Parish at no cost to us.

Baby Bottles for Life

We are distributing Baby Bottles during the Advent & Christmas season to collect donations for the Thurston County Pro-Life Movement.

Return your filled bottles any time before January 3rd!

Baskets will be available in the Narthex

Sponsored by

KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
COUNCIL 17152

Please return the bottles to the church as they will be used for future fundraisers

Christmas is almost here!

Christmas is almost here! Isn't it exciting? It's like when it's getting really close to your birthday, except that people all over the world are going to be celebrating Christmas! We should help make Jesus' birthday as special as we can!

If your family has an Advent wreath, today all four of the candles will be lit. This represents the light of Jesus coming closer and getting brighter. Jesus is the light of the world. If we want to make Christmas beautiful, then we should make our own lives shine with the love of Jesus.

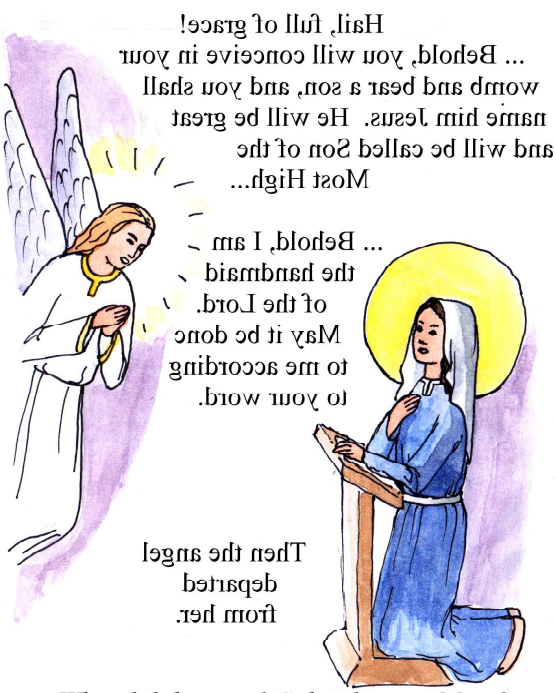
Does your family have a Christmas tree? Are there lights on it? Do you have Christmas lights on your house? All the little lights you see can represent all the people whose lives are lit up with the love of God. Or maybe they can represent all the good things you can do to brighten up other people's lives! Think of some things you can do this week to love God and bring His love to your family and your friends and neighbours.

Answers to True or False: 1.false. (Gabriel) 2.false. 3.true. 4.true. 5 false. 6 true. 7 true. (the baby was John the Baptist)

www.thekidsbulletin.com

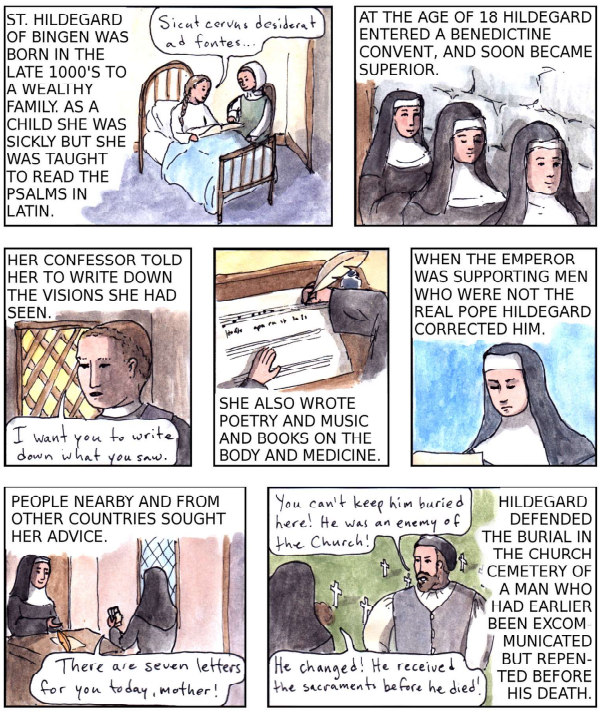
The Kids' Bulletin

Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 20th, 2020



What did the angel Gabriel say to Mary?
What did she reply to him?
Look in the mirror to find out!

SAINT HILDEGARD OF BINGEN
DECEMBER 17



SAINT HILDEGARD KNEW A LOT ABOUT GOD FROM THE VISIONS HE HAD GIVEN HER, BUT SHE DID NOT BRAG OR TELL PEOPLE ABOUT IT. SHE JUST USED HER TALENTS TO BRING PEOPLE CLOSER TO GOD THROUGH MUSIC AND SCIENCE. SHE WAS VERY WISE AND USED HER INTELLIGENCE TO HELP SOULS TOO.

True or False?

Today's Gospel Reading: The Angel Visits Mary

How well do you know the story of the Annunciation? See if you know which are true and which are false:

1. God sent the angel Michael to bring His message to Our Lady. True or false?
2. When Mary saw the angel, she covered her eyes. True or false?
3. The angel told Mary, "Do not be afraid." True or false?
4. The angel told Our Lady that she would have a Son that she would name 'Jesus.' True or false?
5. Mary just said okay and the angel left right away. True or false?
6. When Mary said she didn't understand, Gabriel told her that the baby would be the Son of God. True or false?
7. Before he left, the angel told Mary that her old cousin, Elizabeth, was going to have a baby too. True or false?

thekidsbulletin@gmail.com

The Washington State Catholic Conference, Catholic Charities and Catholic Health Care Support COVID-19 Vaccinations

December 12, 2020

The Washington State Catholic Conference (WSCC) affirms that the recently announced COVID-19 vaccines are morally permissible. The US Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) confirms the moral permissibility of the vaccines in this memorandum dated November 20, 2020 from the USCCB Committee on Doctrine. **Together with the Catholic Health Care organizations and Catholic Charities of Washington state, we recommend the faithful get the COVID-19 vaccine to protect themselves, loved ones, and the community.**

Washington state was the first in the country to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic. Since the outset of this health emergency, Catholic dioceses, Catholic Charities and Catholic Health Care organizations around the state focused on working together to faithfully carry out our Catholic spiritual, social and health care ministries. To further this effort, the Catholic Bishops of the WSCC commit to:

- Promoting and encouraging COVID-19 vaccinations in collaboration with state and local governments and other entities.
- Advocating on behalf of vulnerable populations to ensure that they have access to safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines; and,
- Providing regular and accurate information to parishioners and the community in support of morally acceptable, safe, and effective COVID-19 vaccines.

Some people have concerns about the safety of these vaccines due to the speed of their development and FDA approval. There is also concern about the risk of side effects. It is not uncommon to experience minor side effects from being vaccinated. People may feel temporarily uncomfortable, but the benefits from the vaccine exceed the burden. In addition, the speed at which vaccines have been developed may be due to some degree, on utilizing past scientific advances against coronaviruses.

The Washington Catholic dioceses, Catholic Charities and Catholic health systems will also continue to work with the Governor's Office, the State Department of Health, and county and local public health agencies. Our collaboration commits to strong outreach to vulnerable populations such as farmworkers, frail and elderly, undocumented individuals and low-wage earners who seek guidance and assistance from our ministries.

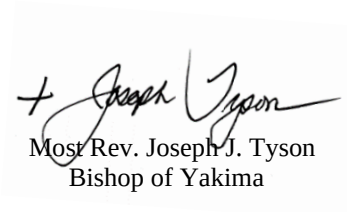
Finally, we offer a special thanks to the health care professionals who continue to care for the sick; to essential workers that enable society to continue functioning; for scientists and researchers who brought us to this moment; to teachers and parents struggling to educate children; to workers in ministries finding innovative ways to bring spiritual and corporal resources to congregations; and to everyone who has helped carry the burden of others during this pandemic. We pray for them as we pray for the world.

710 Ninth Avenue • Seattle, WA 98104 • Tel 206.301.0556 • Fax 206.301.0558 • E-mail: wscc@wacatholics.org

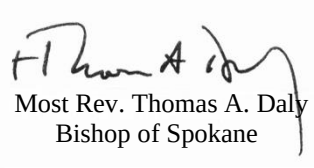
We still have much work to do, but we now have hope and a path forward rooted in the healing ministry of Jesus Christ. We place our trust and confidence in the providence of God.

In the heart of Christ,

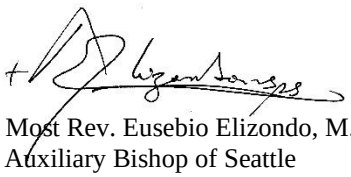
Most Rev. Paul D. Etienne
Archbishop of Seattle



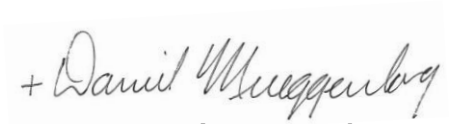
Most Rev. Joseph J. Tyson
Bishop of Yakima



Most Rev. Thomas A. Daly
Bishop of Spokane



Most Rev. Eusebio Elizondo, M.Sp.S.
Auxiliary Bishop of Seattle



Most Rev. Daniel H. Mueggenborg
Auxiliary Bishop of Seattle

Contact: Adrienne Joyce: 253-229-4987

A Home for the Lord
December 20, 2020
4th Sunday of Advent

ARCHDIOCESE OF SEATTLE

At Home with Faith

With only a few days until Christmas, let us pause and ask ourselves: are our hearts ready to receive Jesus? As imperfect and flawed as we may be, the Lord wants a simple "yes" to make in us a home.

On this 4th Sunday of Advent, we hear about Mary's fiat or "yes." Although she did not understand how she was to be the mother of the Lord, she still said yes. She received Jesus in her womb and in her life.

In the first reading, the prophet Nathan tells King David "the Lord is with you," the same words the angel Gabriel says to Mary. King David goes on to build a temple, a physical home for the Lord. Mary herself becomes the home and bearer of the Son of God. In these times, we know that God is with us, and that with our yes, he will continue to dwell with and in us.

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.

2 Samuel 7:1-5, 8B-12, 14A, 16

Here I am living in a house of cedar, while the ark of God dwells in a tent! Or should you build me a house to dwell in?

Psalm 89:2-3, 4-5, 27, 29

Forever I will sing the goodness of the Lord!

Romans 16:25-27

To him who can strengthen you, be glory forever.

Luke 1:26-38

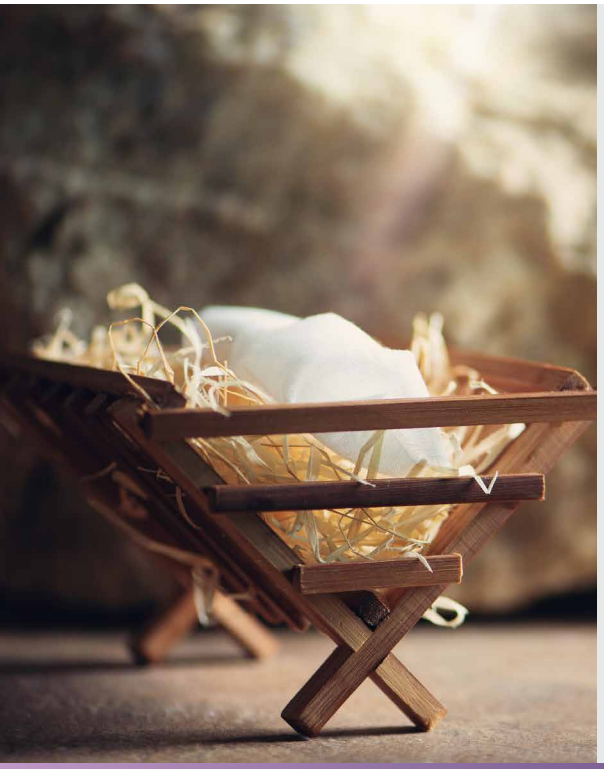
Nothing will be impossible for God!

Talk

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

Here are three things we can do to prepare our hearts to receive Jesus this Christmas:

- **Re-enact a posada in your own home.** Set a small nativity scene on a platter to carry carefully either outside or inside the house. Some can be the innkeeper(s) standing behind the door while others represent Mary and Joseph asking for shelter. You can sing or play an Advent song or the traditional song for the Posadas. After the song, the innkeeper opens the door, which represents the door to our hearts, and allows the family in.
- **Take a moment to think about and pray for those who are seeking shelter.** Like Joseph and Mary, many people today are experiencing homelessness or seeking safe refuge. Pray for those who need hope and shelter this Christmas.
- **Make room for Jesus.** Encourage your children to pick some toys or clothing that are still in good condition, and that they could give away for other children to enjoy. As you do this exercise with your children, pray about other ways you can make room for Jesus and others in your life.



Christmas is almost here!

Have we made room for the Lord?

Many Christians in Latin America, Spain and the United States celebrate the Posadas to accompany Joseph and Mary on the journey before the birth of Jesus. The Posadas start on December 16th and end on December 24th. The word posada means “lodging” or “accommodation,” and it is a reference to the inn from the nativity story. It is a nine-day period that signifies accompanying Mary on the nine months of pregnancy.

One of the ways the Posadas are celebrated is by re-enacting Joseph and Mary’s journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem as they seek for a place to stay. As we wait these last few days before Christmas, let us create space in our hearts to receive Jesus. Let us say yes to him once more, and open the “inns” of our hearts, so that he may be born in us once again.

You can listen to the traditional song for Posadas here.

FORMED®

PICK OF THE WEEK

December 20, 2020

WATCH

CHRISTMAS IN ROME: A CELEBRATION OF THE NATIVITY

Nowhere celebrates the birth of the Savior like Rome. This Christmas, marvel at the Holy City's festive celebration of the coming of the child Jesus in Bethlehem.

LEARN

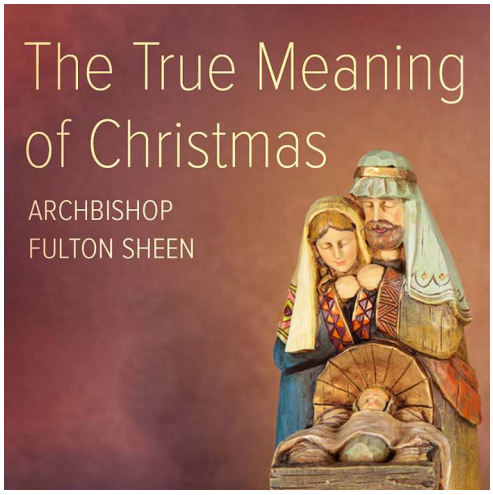
THE STORY OF THE NATIVITY: THE TRUTH OF CHRISTMAS

Christmas is so much more than a humdrum story we've heard since childhood. Join top scholars, speakers, and authors as they explain the gravity of Christ's miraculous birth.

LISTEN

THE TRUE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS BY FULTON SHEEN

This presentation combines recordings of Fulton Sheen's timeless reflections on the meaning of Christmas, mixed with Gregorian chant and seasonal music. It is sure to become a family favorite!



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

The Fourth Sunday of Advent

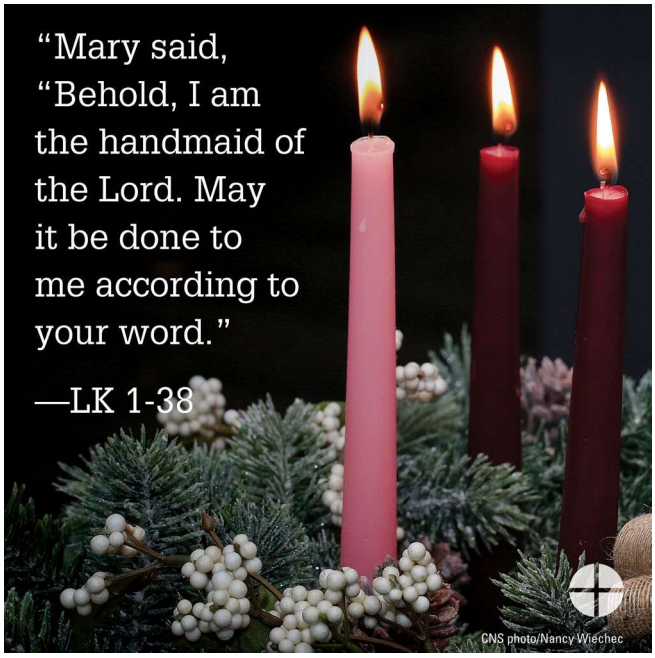
December 20, 2020

Blessing of a Christmas Tree

Christmas is almost here! Have you blessed your Christmas tree yet?

According to custom, the Christmas tree is set up just before Christmas and may remain in place until the Solemnity xof Epiphany. The lights of the tree are illuminated after the prayer of blessing.

In the home the Christmas tree may be blessed by a parent or another family member, in connection with the evening meal on the Vigil of Christmas or at another suitable time on Christmas Day.



When all have gathered, a suitable song may be sung.

The leader makes the sign of the cross, and all reply "Amen."

The leader may greet those present in the following words:

Let us glorify Christ our light, who brings salvation and peace into our midst, now and forever.

R/. Amen.

In the following or similar words, the leader prepares those present for the blessing:

My brothers and sisters, amidst signs and wonders Christ Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea: his birth brings joy to our hearts and enlightenment to our minds. With this tree, decorated and adorned, may we welcome Christ among us; may its lights guide us to the perfect light.

One of those present or the leader reads a text of sacred Scripture, for example, Titus 3:4 (lines 4-7) or Ezekiel 17:22 (lines 22-24 4; I will plant a tender shoot on the mountain heights of Israel.)

Reader: The Word of the Lord.

R/. Thanks be to God.

The intercessions are then said. The leader says:

Let us ask God to send his blessing upon us and upon this

sign of our faith in the Lord.

R/. Lord, give light to our hearts.

That this tree of lights may remind us of the tree of glory on

which Christ accomplished our salvation, let us pray to the

Lord. **R/.**

That the joy of Christmas may always be in our homes, let

us pray to the Lord. **R/.**

That the peace of Christ may dwell in our hearts and in the

world, let us pray to the Lord. **R/.**

After the intercessions the leader invites all present to say the Lord's Prayer.

The leader says the prayer with hands joined:

Lord our God,

we praise you for the light of creation:

the sun, the moon, and the stars of the night.

We praise you for the light of Israel:

the Law, the prophets, and the wisdom of the Scriptures.

We praise you for Jesus Christ, your Son:

he is Emmanuel, God-with-us, the Prince of Peace,

who fills us with the wonder of your love.

Lord God,

let your blessing come upon us

as we illumine this tree.

May the light and cheer it gives

be a sign of the joy that fills our hearts.

May all who delight in this tree

come to the knowledge and joy of salvation.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R/. Amen.

The lights of the tree are then illuminated.

The leader concludes the rite by signing himself or herself with the sign of the cross and saying:

May the God of glory fill our hearts with peace and joy, now

and forever.

R/. Amen.

The blessing concludes with a verse from "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel":

O come, thou dayspring, come and cheer

our spirits by thine advent here;

disperse the gloomy clouds of night

and death's dark shadow put to flight.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel

shall come to thee, O Israel.

—*From Catholic Household Blessings & Prayers*

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Saint John of Kanty

DATES: 1390-1473
FEAST DAY: DECEMBER 23

Greatly revered in his native Poland, this saint, also known as John Cantius, spent most of his life teaching at the University of Krakow, where he was a noted professor of sacred Scripture. He also spent an interval as a parish priest, reputedly forced on him because of academic jealousy. At the university, he impressed on students the need for moderation and good manners in controversy, and was famous for his boundless generosity to Krakow's poor. A personal austerity contributed to his reputation for holiness: He ate no meat and slept on the floor.

CNS Photo

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SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20, 2020

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

"Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus." - Lk 1:31

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

©LPi

WEEKLY PRAYER

READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 20, 2020

SUN 12/20	2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16/Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27, 29 [2a]/Rom 16:25-27/Lk 1:26-38
MON 12/21	Sg 2:8-14 or Zep 3:14-18a/Ps 33:2-3, 11-12, 20-21 [1a; 3a]/Lk 1:39-45
TUE 12/22	1 Sm 1:24-28/1 Sm 2:1, 4-5, 6-7, 8abcd]/Lk 1:46-56
WED 12/23	Mal 3:1-4, 23-24/Ps 25:4-5ab, 8-9, 10 and 14 [cf. Lk 21:28]/Lk 1:57-66
THR 12/24	Morning: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16/Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27 and 29 [2]/Lk 1:67-79
FRI 12/25	Vigil: Is 62:1-5/Ps 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29 [2a]/Acts 13:16-17, 22-25/Mt 1:1-25 or 1:18-25. Night: Is 9:1-6/Ps 96:1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13 [Lk 2:11]/Ti 2:11-14/Lk 2:1-14. Dawn: Is 62:11-12/Ps 97:1, 6, 11-12/Ti 3:4-7/Lk 2:15-20. Day: Is 52:7-10/Ps 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6 [3c]/Heb 1:1-6/Jn 1:1-18 or Jn 1:1-5, 9-14
SAT 12/26	Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59/Ps 31:3cd-4, 6 and 8ab, 16bc and 17 [6]/Mt 10:17-22
SUN 12/27	Sir 3:2-6, 12-14 or Gn 15:1-6; 21:1-3/Ps 128:1-2, 3, 4-5 [cf. 1] or Ps 105:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9 [7a, 8a]/Col 3:12-21 or 3:12-17 or Heb 11:8, 11-12, 17-19/Lk 2:22-40 or 2:22, 39-40

OBSERVANCES FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 20, 2020

Sunday:	4th Sunday of Advent
Monday:	St. Peter Canisius, Priest and Doctor of the Church
Wednesday:	St. John of Kanty, Priest
Thursday:	Christmas Eve
Friday:	The Nativity of the Lord (holy day of obligation)
Saturday:	St. Stephen, the First Martyr
Next Sunday:	The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

LIVE THE LITURGY

Inspiration for the week

Does the world realize that it is waiting? As we go about all of the busyness of our lives and entertain our distractions, there are many holes and gaps in our lives that need to be filled. We are always wanting more, but not really sure what that "more" needs to be. Fulfillment, happiness, contentment, and true satisfactions are fleeting occurrences and often come to us in illusive ways. What we think is the ultimate fix to our anxious emptiness really is only a fancy trend that we entertain. The world does not realize any more today than it did over two thousand years ago that it is waiting for a Savior. We need a Savior. We need to see and embrace the God who has broken into history and become one with us. It is this union of God and man that sets us on a straight path, orders our relationships, establishes proper focus and goals, and tells us whose kingdom we really are meant to serve. The world does not know how truly lost it is. Do you realize how lost you are and that the One you need most is here among us and within your grasp?

O Come All Ye Faithful

WORSHIP & MEDITATION

FIRST READING

"When your times comes and you rest
with your ancestors,
I will raise up your heir after you, sprung
from your loins,
and I will establish his kingdom firm." (2 Sm 12)

PSALM

For ever I will sing the goodness of the Lord.
(Ps 89)

SECOND READING

According to the revelation of the mystery
kept secret for long ages
but now manifested through the
prophetic writings and,
according to the command of the eternal God.
(Rom 16:25b-26a)

GOSPEL

"Behold, you will conceive in your womb
and bear a son,
and you shall name him Jesus.
He will be great and will be called
Son of the Most High." (Lk 1:31-32a)

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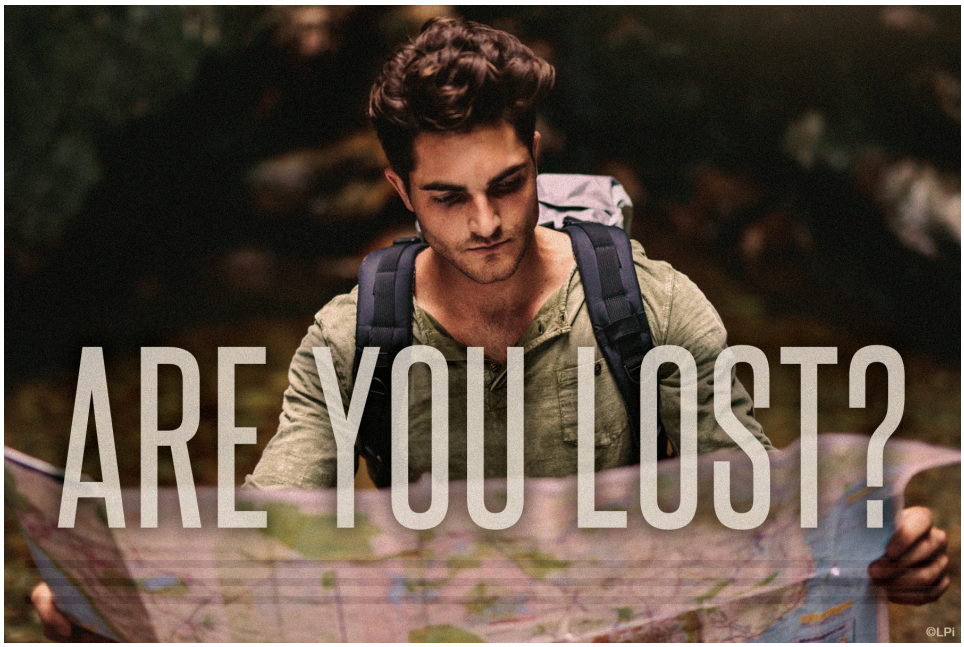

GOSPEL MEDITATION

Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

In Blaise Pascal's work, Pensees, he says: "What else does this craving, and this helplessness, proclaim but that there was once in man a true happiness, of which all that now remains is the empty print and trace? This he tries in vain to fill with everything around him, seeking in things that are not there the help he cannot find in those that are, though none can help, since this infinite abyss can be filled only with an infinite and immutable object; in other words by God himself."

We have a difficult time accepting that fulfillment and happiness are not achieved by our own merits but through a relationship with God. We are hardwired for this relationship and it is in our DNA. The simple fact is that we come from God and are designed to return to God. If our beginning and our end define who we are, why would we not want to seek the One who can truly satisfy? The world does not realize that it is waiting. It is waiting for the birth of God in time, within one's soul and in eternity. We get so confused by seeking other momentary satisfactions that we misinterpret the hunger within. We crave God.

The union of God and humanity, revealed in Jesus Christ, is precisely what sets us on a straight path, orders our relationships, establishes proper focus and goals and tells us whose kingdom we really are meant to serve. We are so lost. God is with us. The prophet Nathan told this to King David, the angel said this to Mary and the birth of Christ brings this Good News to us. We do not need to be busily looking for more things but must learn to find contentment and blessing in the One Presence. This is the beautiful simple message of Advent!

If you are feeling unsettled, anxious, angry, disgruntled, disconnected, unhappy, worried, fearful, off center, becoming overly self-indulgent, unable to spend time alone and without distraction, then there's a good chance you are lost. Now is the time to allow God to find you! Ponder the holy simplicity of Mary's call to be the Mother of God. "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word." When we are helpless and at home with our emptiness, God will fill us. Our Savior has come.

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LITURGICAL LIFE

RESPONDING to the Call

EVERYDAY STEWARDSHIP

Recognize God In Your Ordinary Moments

The Journey

Advent comes along every year and will continue to do so until Jesus returns. As this season draws to a close, we can each ask ourselves, "Am I now any better a disciple of Jesus Christ and more of a steward of all my gifts than before the Advent season started?' I have been on this earth for 40+ years. I have had 40+ Advents to draw closer to God and to work on taking more seriously my baptismal call. Some have gone better than others, but I would like to think my spiritual life progressed at least a small amount during each of them.

Conversion is a process. Stewardship is about a way of living and it is about more than simply being generous when a situation calls for it. Stewardship and conversion go hand-in-hand and we are always moving closer to holiness in Jesus Christ. Living in this way takes practice and commitment. If this Advent didn't go as you had hoped, remember is not really an end. It is just another step along your journey.

This Christmas, while you are giving and receiving gifts and hopefully spending time with those you love, may you take the time to cherish the true gift that came to us over 2000 years ago and continues to call us to this day: Jesus. Let us be grateful beyond measure for this gift above all gifts, let us continue on our journey, and let our lives give testimony to the one who leads us.

— Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

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WHY DO WE DO THAT?

Catholic Life Explained:

Question:

What is the difference between apostles and disciples?

Answer:

When we look at the gospel accounts of the life of Jesus, we see two special titles applied to his followers: *apostles* and *disciples*. At first glance, we might think that these two words are interchangeable, but when we look at what each one means, we quickly see that the evangelists were using them very specifically. When we look more closely, we see that while Jesus had many *disciples*, the group of *apostles* was much more limited and referred to Jesus' closest collaborators.

The word *apostle* essentially means "one who is sent forth" or, as we might think of it today, "an ambassador." The group of apostles — sometimes called the Twelve — included those twelve men who formed Jesus' inner circle (see Mark 3:13-14; Luke 6:12-13). It was this group that received the gift of the Holy Spirit and who were sent out by Jesus with the special mission of forgiving sins on that first Easter Sunday (see John 20:19-23). In time, the Catholic Tradition also recognize Saint Paul and Saint Barnabas as apostles, recognizing that they also shared the mandate of going out in the Lord's name to pray, to bless, and to preach. In 2016, during the Jubilee of Mercy, Pope Francis raised the liturgical celebration of Saint Mary Magdalene to the rank of feast, recognizing that she also received a special mandate to proclaim the good news of Jesus' resurrection to the Eleven, becoming the "apostle to the apostles." In a particular way, the bishops continue the mission of the apostles in our own time.

When we think of the word *disciple*, we see that it has a very different meaning. Rather than referring to those who were sent out to carry on the mission of Jesus, disciple literally means "student" or, more specially, an "apprentice learner." The task of the disciple is to learn and integrate into their lives the teachings, values, and way of life of their master teacher. Although a disciple might be called on to explain or represent aspects of their life, in light of the teachings they receive from this master teacher, Christian discipleship is ultimately about living our lives with faith and integrity, guided by the life and mission of Jesus, our Master Teacher. The call to discipleship is the common vocation of all Christians.

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And the angel said to her in reply, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God."

– Lk 1:35

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LITURGICAL LIFE

QUESTIONS OF THE WEEK

Invite Parishioners to Reflect and Respond to Scripture

First Reading

Today's reading from Second Samuel narrates the context in which God establishes his covenantal promise to King David around the year 1000 B.C. In the birth of Jesus, God fulfills his covenant with David. What does this teach us about the idea of "salvation history?"

Second Reading

Paul concludes his letter to the Romans with a hymn of praise to God for the long-awaited revelation that all are saved and justified through faith in Christ. In what ways are you praising God during this season of Advent?

Gospel Reading

Today's Gospel reading records the angel Gabriel's announcement to Mary of the upcoming birth of Christ. Mary's acceptance of God's will for her life ("May it be done to me according to your word.") models for all of us unconditional faith. How can we encourage others to embrace such faith?

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.

Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father."

- Lk 1:30-32

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass
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KIDS CORNER

READ THE GOSPEL AND COMPLETE A PUZZLE!

SHARING THE GOSPEL

Think of the people you trust. These are people you can count on, no matter what happens. Both Mary and Elizabeth were amazed to learn that they were pregnant. God had surprised each of them with a special miracle - a baby. God trusted them both to take care of their babies. Mary and Elizabeth trusted God to help them. You can trust God, too.

PRAYER

God, help me to trust you like Mary and Elizabeth did.

MISSION FOR THE WEEK

Name three reasons you can always trust God.

Complete the picture.

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