



HOLY SPIRIT PARISH

114 Kingsmere Place • Saskatoon • SK • S7J 3V7
(306)374-1425 • info@holyspiritsaskatoon.ca
holyspiritsaskatoon.ca

Our Mission Statement

*Inspired by the Holy Spirit we are a Eucharistic community called by God
To share the love of Jesus Christ and create a welcoming parish of renewal and mission.*



December 10, 2023 | Second Sunday of Advent

Is 40:1-5, 9-11 | 2 Pt 3:8-14 | Mk 1:1-8

Written by
THE
FAITHFUL
DISCIPLE

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

Can you hear it? The voice crying out in the desert? While John the Baptist was the one literally proclaiming, from the desert, the coming of the Lord, we should listen for echoes of his message today. John foretold that Jesus – the Father’s Incarnate Son – was on his way to redeem the world. Through Jesus’ passion and death, the gates of heaven were flung open so all who believe in him would have eternal life. This is the Good News he proclaimed then, and the Church proclaims today: *Christ has come! Christ has died, Christ is risen, and Christ will come again.* This is what we prepare for in Advent – to celebrate, on Christmas day, Christ’s coming into the world, and that he will one day return in glory. The Lord gives comfort to his people in his words, and in his presence to us in the Eucharist: “According to his promise we await new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells.” So, trust in the Lord, remain vigilant, and take heed of the voices that remind us to “prepare the way of the Lord.”

GO EVANGELIZE

PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

Each year, we are given the gift of Advent. It is a season that invites us to slow down, reflect on the gift of Jesus and prepare to celebrate the Nativity of the Lord. Ironically, though, it happens at one of the most frenzied times of the year as we rush to keep up with cookie baking, tree decorating and merry-making. Advent is short – it includes four Sundays but can be three to four weeks long depending on the weekday upon which Christmas falls – and it sometimes doesn’t seem long enough to truly prepare our hearts. This year Advent is three weeks and a day – so we are close to reaching the midway point, which is a good time to ask ourselves: How tuned in are we to John the Baptist’s message? If we feel like we’re being carried along in a wave of consumerism, it’s not too late to make a course correction. We can step away from the fray and carve out time to enjoy the stillness of Advent and truly listen to the voice crying out in the desert.

SING *Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare, / One more seed is planted there: / Give up your strength the seed to nourish, / That in course the flower may flourish. / People, look east and sing today: / Love, the rose, is on the way.*

DECEMBER 10	DECEMBER 11	DECEMBER 12	DECEMBER 13	DECEMBER 14	DECEMBER 15	DECEMBER 16
10a Mass 12p Mass 1-4p Adoration 7p Mass	7p RCIA	8:30a Mass 6:30p Advent Music and Prayer	8:30a Mass 4-5p Children’s Choir 7p Adoration 7p Penitential Service	8:30a Mass	8:30a Mass 9a-12p Adoration 6:30p High School Youth Group	10a First Reconciliation 11a-12p Confession 5p Mass 6p K of C Potluck

THIS WEEK



ADVENT MUSIC AND PRAYER

Join us **Tuesday, December 12th from 6:30-7:30pm** for an evening of music, prayer, and reflection. Fr. Greg Smith-Windsor will lead us in an Advent Reflection and the Spirit of the Cross Choir will lead us in music. Fellowship will follow. All are welcome to attend.

Sign-up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C49ADA922A1FDC07-46194034-advent>

**AND join us for an Advent Penitential Service
Wednesday, December 13 at 7pm.**

PLEASE NOTE: There will not be Adoration on Sunday, December 24.

WE PLEDGE 5%

MacKenzie-Fort Smith is a missionary diocese of the Catholic Church that includes the Northwest Territories, the northern extremity of Saskatchewan and the extreme west of the Territory of Nunavut in Canada. As of 2004, the diocese contained 46 parishes and missions, 4 active diocesan priests, 7 religious priests, and 28,540 Catholics. At the time, it also had 16 women religious, 8 religious brothers, and 3 permanent deacons. The seat of the diocese is Our Lady of Victory Church in Inuvik. The current Bishop is Jon Hansen C.Ss.R. These funds will help with educating the laity and enables parish leaders to provide religious and spiritual leadership in the Archdiocese of MacKenzie-Fort Smith. Thank you for your support.



Our sincere condolences to:

- Connie, Brenda and families on the death of father, grandfather, great grandfather Arnold Senger.
- Don, Neil, Anne, Pat, Nancy and families on the death of wife, mother, grandmother Norma Gendzwill.
- Delores, Blair, Bob, Tammy and families on the death of husband, father, grandfather Ed Scheidl.
- The family of Roman Weisensel.

May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in God's peace.

LET US PRAY

- ♦ For the sick and all those that care for them, today we pray for: Father Marc Mireau, Father Bernard De Margerie, Leon Hartman, Betty Anne Tomney, Bob Kudel, Quinn Gorman, Roberta Marisi, Trev Yaeger, Jeff Haugen, Shelley Fenrich, Josephine Walter, we pray to the Lord.
- ♦ For all those who have died, today we remember:
- ♦ And on the anniversary of death, Bill Lesko, Matthew Kratchmer

We pray to the Lord.



Truth and Reconciliation Commission Healing Response-TRC

Indigenous Reconciliation Fund-IRF

PARISH PEW COLLECTION—DECEMBER 17

to donate use the QR code or dscf.ca/trc



I am writing on behalf of the Parish Pastoral Council to express our gratitude for your generous donations towards the **Christmas Hampers for St. Mary's Parish**. These hampers are meant to serve our indigenous brothers and sisters in need. This year, we decided to collect food items for the hampers instead of monetary donations, as the need for food was greater. However, we neglected to remove the pink envelopes designated for the hampers. Any monetary donations received will be directed to the Diocese of Saskatoon's \$1.25 million Indigenous Healing Funds with your permission. This fund supports local Indigenous projects that promote healing, reconciliation, education, and community building. You can find more information about the fundraising at dscf.ca/trc. We want to thank you for your tremendous generosity and pray that God blesses you always. **-Fr. Joseph Salihu, Pastor**

*Save the
Date*

Please join us at our **Parish Winter Social Dinner Party** on Saturday, January 13, 2024!
Adults \$30, Child/Youth \$10, Children under 5 free. Tickets will be sold after Mass starting on December 16th.
Act fast, tickets are limited! *See the poster in the online bulletin for more information.*



Offering envelopes are here!

They will be available in the Place of Welcome December 9/10 & 16/17 and again in the New Year.



Poinsettias are available for purchase in honour of a loved one. The Art & Environment Committee will use these poinsettias as part of the Christmas décor in the church. **Drop an envelope into the offering basket or in the mail slot at the office no later than Dec. 17. Mark it 'Poinsettia' with the name of your loved one stating 'In honour' of (living) or 'in Memory' of (deceased) with your name and phone number.** A card with your loved one's name will be placed with a poinsettia for the Christmas season.

FREE—190 SQ FT of Oak Hardwood—Fresh Air Fireplace—See online bulletin for more details.

2023 INFANT BAPTISM 2023 Baptism Schedule Sharon 306-374-1425 or spowell@rcdos.ca
CHRISTIAN INITIATION OF CHILDREN Sharon at spowell@rcdos.ca or 306-374-1425
CHRISTIAN INITIATION FOR ADULTS - RCIA Erin 306-374-1425 or email egratton@rcdos.ca.
MARRIAGE PREPARATION Nicole Gursky at 306 229-0384 or email ngursky@sasktel.net
Please visit holyspiritsaskatoon.ca for more information about faith formation.

PASTOR • Fr. Joseph Salihu jsalihu@rcdos.ca

ASSOCIATE PASTOR • Fr. Greg Smith-Windsor

HOLY SPIRIT PARISH STAFF

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Youth Ministry Coordinator

Lynn Eremondi leremondi@rcdos.ca



If you need prayer, support, a visit (with the Eucharist or otherwise), Anointing of the Sick, or assistance with funeral planning, Ministry of Care is just a phone call or email away.

Please contact **Kelly Wormsbecker** Pastoral Associate- Ministry of Care
kwormsbecker@rcdos.ca or call 306-374-1425



CATHOLIC WOMEN'S LEAGUE
Margaret Schwab 306-227-8930



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS 8905

Eric Lautsch
SirKnightEric@outlook.com

WAYS TO DONATE TO HOLY SPIRIT PARISH

- 1. Sign up for Pre-Authorized Giving** Registration [forms](#) are available at the church office, online on our parish website, or via email. Donate using debit or credit card.
- 2. Interac e-Transfer using online banking:** send e-transfer to finance@holyspiritsaskatoon.ca (it is directly deposited, no password needed). Please put your full name and envelope number in the message box along with any special offering designation.
- 3. Parish Offertory:** <https://dscf.ca/parish-offertory/>
- 4. Mail envelopes to the church:** 114 Kingsmere Place, Saskatoon, SK, S7J 3V7
- 5. Drop envelopes off at church:** Put envelopes into the office door mail slot.
- 6. Place envelopes in the offertory basket at Mass**



Another option to
donating to your
parish online:

**PARISH OFFERTORY
QR CODE**



Enjoy the latest and greatest Catholic video, audio, and reading material from FORMED.org! Simply head over to holyspiritsaskatoon.formed.org and register your free account to access a tremendous wealth of Catholic content.

You may also download the FORMED app for iOS and Android devices.

The cost to you is absolutely free: our parish has a subscription for the entire year.

Are you new to the parish? Has your information changed?

Fill out this [form](#) online

Or contact the office (306) 374-3190 or info@holyspiritsaskatoon.ca



Holy Spirit Parish

ADVENT MUSIC & PRAYER

AN EVENING OF MUSIC, PRAYER, &
REFLECTION

Music led by Spirit of the Cross
Reflection by Fr. Greg Smith-Windsor

TUES DEC 12 6:30-7:30PM

SIGN UP IN PLACE OF WELCOME OR PARISH
WEBSITE

WWW.HOLYSPIRITSASKATOON.CA



ADVENT

Penitential Service

**WEDNESDAY,
DECEMBER 13**

7PM



Click the links to learn more about each initiative:

[Truth and Reconciliation Commission Healing Response \(TRC\)](#)

[Indigenous Reconciliation Fund \(IRF\)](#)



PARISH PEW COLLECTION—DECEMBER 17
to donate use the QR code or dscf.ca/trc



HOLY SPIRIT PARISH

Christmas Season Mass Times

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Saturday December 23 at 5pm

Sunday December 24 at 10am (livestream)

Christmas Masses

Sunday, December 24 at 5pm (livestream), 8pm, 11pm

Monday, December 25 at 10am



Feast of the Holy Family

Saturday, December 30 at 5pm

Sunday, December 31 at 10am, 12 noon (livestream)

Solemnity of Holy Mary Mother of God

Sunday, December 31 at 7pm

Monday, Jan 1 at 10 am (livestream)



FREE

Fresh Air Fireplace

- Wood burning
- Comes with a remote
- Has a natural gas insert
- Works well—Good condition



ALSO FREE

**Approximately 190 SQ FT of Oak
Hardwood**

Pick up only. No holds.

HOLY SPIRIT PARISH
INVITES YOU TO

Winter Social

DINNER • PARTY

JANUARY

SATURDAY 13 AT 630 PM

2024

TICKETS ARE LIMITED

YOUTH / CHILD \$10 | ADULT \$30

CHILDREN 5 AND UNDER ARE FREE

DOORS OPEN AT 530PM

DINNER • CASH BAR • DOOR PRIZES

GET YOUR TICKETS AFTER MASS
OR CONTACT LYNN:
(306 374 1425)

Holy
Spirit
Church



HOLY SPIRIT PARISH, 114 KINGSMERE PL., SK



Diocesan Bulletin

Dec. 10, 2023 - Second Sunday of Advent

1



*In all things we are rooted in Christ,
in His desire to bring God's love to all peoples.*

Upcoming Events

Knights of Columbus - Brother's Keepers Men's Breakfast will be held from 7 a.m. to 8 a.m. **Tuesday, Dec. 12** at Queen's House, Saskatoon. Call Brendan at (306) 242-1916.

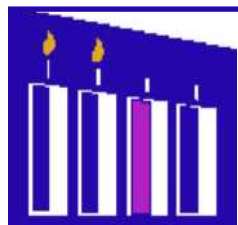
2025 Jubilee: Holy Year Pilgrimage - Join Bishop Stephen Hero and Fr. Maurice Fiolleau of Prince Albert on a Pilgrimage to Rome, Vatican City and Assisi Dec. 10-18, 2025 during the 2025 Jubilee Holy Year. A presentation about the trip will be held 7 p.m. **Tuesday Dec. 12** on Zoom. E-mail Tom Brothwell to get the link to the Dec. 12 online meeting: tom.brothwell@caask.ca

Diocesan Cenacle of Prayer will be held at 3 pm. **Wednesday, Dec. 13** at St. Paul Co-Cathedral, 720 Spadina Crescent, Saskatoon. Information: Edna (306) 382-1680.

A Priest Discernment Night will be held 7 p.m. **Thursday, Dec. 14** at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish, 1235-12th Street E., Saskatoon for men interested in reflecting, discussing, and praying about their vocational path. For information contact Fr. Daniel Yasinski at dyasinski@rcdos.ca (306) 834-2269; or Fr. Colin Roy at croy@rcdos.ca (306) 256-3218.

Awaken adult faith program: "Praying as Catholics" - Registration is underway for this in-person series which will include experiences of different kinds of prayer, to be held from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. on **four Tuesday evenings in January** at the Cathedral of the Holy Family, 123 Nelson Road, Saskatoon. Includes: **Jan. 9:** Centering Prayer with Fr. Kevin McGee; **Jan. 16:** Eucharistic Adoration with Fr. Gerard Cooper; **Jan. 23:** Praying With the Sacred Scripture with Verbum Dei sisters; **Jan. 30:** Marian Prayer with Fr. Daniel Yasinski. Cost: \$40 for the series. Register at: <https://form.jotform.com/231799051119257> or call Astrid Alas for more information: (306) 659-5858.

New IPL course - The diocesan Indigenous Pastoral & Lay Leader (IPL) Ministry Education program presents a new course "Contemporary Effects of Colonization II: Social Justice," from **Jan. 9 to March 5**, 4:15 to 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday afternoons. Cost: \$200 (some funding assistance available). No pre-requisite is necessary (those completing eight courses receive a diploma). See: rcdos.ca/indigenous-ministry-education.



Diocesan Prayer - As we prepare to celebrate the National Day of Prayer in Solidarity with Indigenous Peoples on the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe Dec. 12, we pray that our Creator God will help us to be healed of our wounds and bless our mutual journey of peace, justice, and reconciliation.

Christmas Schedules and

the Sacrament of Reconciliation in Advent

Find Advent / Christmas postings submitted by parishes on the diocesan website's **Advent-Christmas schedule:**
rcdos.ca/advent-christmas-schedule

Check with your local parish for details and other opportunities.

Saskatoon Penitential Services with Confessions:

- 7:30 pm **Monday, Dec. 11:** St. Peter the Apostle, 1121 Northumberland Ave. (*Vietnamese Catholic community*)
- 5:30 pm **Tuesday, Dec. 12:** St. Francis Xavier, 222 Willow St.
- 7 pm **Wednesday, Dec. 13:** Holy Spirit, 114 Kingsmere Place.
- 7 pm **Wednesday, Dec. 13:** St. Paul Co-Cathedral, 720 Spadina Cr.
- 7 pm **Thursday, Dec. 14:** St. John Bosco, 1202 Avenue O S.
- 7 pm **Friday, Dec. 15:** Saint Anne, 217 Lenore Drive (*in conjunction with Eucharistic adoration event "Source"*).
- 7 pm **Friday, Dec. 15:** St. Joseph, 535-8th St. E.
- 7 pm **Tuesday, Dec. 19:** Our Lady of Lourdes, 1235-12th St. E.
- 7 pm **Tuesday, Dec. 19:** St. Philip Neri, 1904 Munroe Ave.
- 7 pm **Wednesday, Dec. 20:** St. Augustine, 602 Boychuk Dr.
- 5 pm **Thursday, Dec. 21:** St. Mary, 211 Avenue O S.

Other confession opportunities in Saskatoon:

- 11 am **Monday to Saturday** at St. Paul Co-Cathedral, 720 Spadina Cres. E. (*followed by daily Mass*).
- 11 am **Friday and Saturday** and 7 p.m. **Thursday** at Cathedral of the Holy Family, 123 Nelson Road (*followed by daily Mass*).

Rural-Area Penitential Services with Confessions:

- St. Gabriel, **Biggar** - 7 pm Wednesday, Dec. 13.
- St. Michael, **Cudworth** - 7:30 pm - Wednesday, Dec. 20.
- Sacred Heart, **Denzil** - 7 pm Wednesday, Dec. 20.
- Our Lady of Grace, **Dodsland** - 7 pm Thursday, Dec. 21.
- Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish, **Elrose** - 4:30 pm Saturday, Dec. 16.
- Christ the King, **Foam Lake** - 6:30 pm Thursday, Dec. 21.
- St. Augustine of Canterbury, **Humboldt** - 7 pm Thursday, Dec. 14.
- Our Lady of the Assumption, **Kerrobert** - 7 pm Wed. Dec. 13.
- Sacred Heart, **Lancer** - After 11 am Mass Sunday, Dec. 17.
- St. Mary, **Lanigan** - 7 pm Thursday Dec 21.
- Little Flower, **Leader** - 7 pm Friday, Dec. 15.
- Sacred Heart, **Liebenthal** - After 7:30 pm Mass Sat., Dec. 16.
- St. Eugene de Mazenod, **Luseland** - 5 pm Tuesday, Dec. 19.
- St. Mary, **Macklin** - 7 pm Friday, Dec. 15.
- Immaculate Heart of Mary, **Major** - 7 pm Wednesday, Dec. 20.
- Immaculate Heart of Mary, **Martensville** - 6:30 pm Tues. Dec. 12.
- St. Theresa, **Rosetown** - 6:30 pm. Monday, Dec. 11.
- Our Lady of Perpetual Help, **Wishart** - 6:30 pm Tues. Dec. 19.
- St. Mary, **Wynyard** - 6:30 pm Monday, Dec. 18.

Message Board



2

Simbang Gabi Novena of Masses before Christmas - The Saskatoon Filipino Catholic community will gather for Simbang Gabi **Dec. 15-23** at three parishes in Saskatoon: St. Peter the Apostle, St. Patrick, and the Cathedral of the Holy Family. Find the schedule and details at: rcdos.ca/simbang-gabi. Simbang Gabi celebrations will also be held at St. Theresa Parish in Rosetown, SK., from **Dec. 14-22**; call (306) 882-2340 for info.

Prison Outreach at Christmas - The diocesan Restorative Ministry Office is again seeking monetary donations to purchase small, identical gifts for the men at the Saskatoon Correctional Centre, as a way to share our Christmas joy and let them know they are not forgotten by God or the community. In addition, the prison ministry office is collecting blank Christmas cards for men to use to send greetings to family members in the community. Drop off/ mail: "Attention Dianne," Catholic Pastoral Centre, 2nd floor, Cathedral of the Holy Family, 123 Nelson Road, Saskatoon, S7S 1H1. The Catholic Centre is open weekdays from 9 a.m. to noon and from 1 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. Please make cheques out to "Restorative Ministry" or donations can also be made online at dscf.ca/designated-ministry-support by choosing "Prison Ministry - Christmas" in the drop-down box. (*Restorative Ministry is supported by the Bishop's Annual Appeal.*)

Journey Through Advent video series - The Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops presents "Journey through Advent" with Bishop Jon Hansen, CSsR, of the northern diocese of Mackenzie-Fort Smith. This is a joint initiative of the National Liturgy Office, the Office national de liturgie and the Office for Evangelization and Catechesis, posted online at: www.cccb.ca

Cheminer ensemble durant l'Avent - La Conférence des évêques catholiques du Canada présente Cheminer ensemble durant l'Avent. Approfondissons ensemble, avec Monseigneur Alain Faubert, Évêque auxiliaire de Montréal, la Parole de Dieu de l'Avent 2023. Cheminer ensemble durant l'Avent: une initiative conjointe de l'Office national de liturgie, du National Liturgy Office, et de l'Office for Evangelization and Catechesis – www.cecc.ca

Christmas film - The creators of The Chosen television series have taken the episodes "The Shepherd" and "The Messengers" from Christmas past and woven them together into one story about the birth of Jesus entitled "Christmas with The Chosen: Holy Night." It is being shown in theatres **Dec. 12-17**. The special presentation also includes classic Christmas carols. Find information about dates, cinema locations, and get tickets: www.fathomevents.com/events/christmas-with-the-chosen-2023

Breathe Catholic marriage conference in Saskatoon: Is it time to "Breathe" fresh air into your marriage? Make room on your calendar and recharge your relationship at the Breathe Catholic Marriage Conference, **March 8-9, 2024** at the Cathedral of the Holy Family in Saskatoon. Find information and registration online: www.catholicmarriageandfamily.com. Early-bird registration for those registering before Dec. 31 is \$275 per couple (regular price \$375).

Diocesan Collection for the Indigenous Reconciliation Fund (IRF)

A collection will be held in parishes across the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon on the Third Sunday of Advent, **Dec. 17, 2023**, as part of our diocesan contribution to the national Catholic pledge to support healing and reconciliation initiatives for Residential School survivors and their communities.

Your donations to the TRC Fund have already helped many organizations in our community, including Saskatoon Tribal Council, Haven Family Connections, St. Michael Community School, and Returning to Spirit. Project applications are being accepted and processed quarterly, and all donations support local programs.

To learn more or to make a donation online, visit the Diocese of Saskatoon Catholic Foundation website:

dscf.ca/trc

The Church in Canada celebrates the National Day of Prayer in Solidarity with Indigenous Peoples on the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe Dec. 12, 2023.

Please pray this prayer that Pope Francis prayed at Lac Ste Anne, AB, during his pilgrimage to Canada:

"Lord, as the people on the shores of the Sea of Galilee were not afraid to cry out to you with their needs, so we come to you, Lord ... with whatever pain we bear within us. We bring to you our weariness and our struggles, the wounds of the violence suffered by Indigenous brothers and sisters. In this blessed place, where harmony and peace reign, we present to you the disharmony of our experiences, the terrible effects of colonization, the indelible pain of so many families, grandparents and children. Lord, help us to be healed of our wounds. We know, Lord, that this requires effort, care and concrete actions on our part; but we also know that we cannot do this alone. We rely on you and on the intercession of your mother and your grandmother. Yes, Lord, we entrust ourselves to the intercession of your mother and your grandmother, because mothers and grandmothers help to heal the wounds of our hearts." (from *Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops*)

The Diocesan Bulletin is a publication of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Saskatoon

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<http://news.rcdos.ca>

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THE FILIPINO CATHOLIC COMMUNITY, SASKATOON

SIMBANG GABI 2023

PRE-CHRISTMAS NOVENA MASS
December 15-23, 2023

MASS SCHEDULE

	CATHEDRAL OF THE HOLY FAMILY	ST. PATRICK PARISH	ST. PETER THE APOSTLE PARISH
DEC 15 FRI	7PM	7PM	6PM
DEC 16 SAT	7PM	5PM	630PM
DEC 17 SUN	630PM	7PM	11AM
DEC 18 MON	7PM	7PM	6PM
DEC 19 TUE	7PM	7PM	6PM
DEC 20 WED	7PM	7PM	6PM
DEC 21 THUR	7PM	7PM	6PM
DEC 22 FRI	7PM	7PM	6PM
DEC 23 SAT	7PM	5PM	630PM

**You are invited to spend time with fellow parishioners
for refreshments after Mass.**

Volunteer opportunities still available.
For more information please contact your parish.



St. Patrick Parish, SK



Holy Family Cathedral, SK



St. Peter the Apostle, SK



Bringing Home the Word

Second Sunday of Advent (B)

December 10, 2023

Prepare the Way of the Lord

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

The admonition in the title of this reflection is found in the reading from Isaiah and in the Gospel passage. Isaiah describes a long line of exiles returning to Jerusalem after many hard years in Babylon. God leads them back home. In preparation for God's and the people's entry, the way is made clear: "Every valley shall be lifted up...The rugged land shall be a plain" (Isaiah 40:4). The road is repaired, just as we might do if someone important were coming to town. The Gospel writer reinterprets this passage. Instead of repairing an actual roadway, the words of John the Baptist prepare for the entrance of Jesus into his public

ministry. Despite their differences, both passages speak of the "way of the Lord," which is the way of salvation.

The people are told they will get a new start. In the first reading it will be after exile; in the Gospel it is the new ministry of Jesus. Even St. Peter refers to this newness. He calls it "new heavens and a new earth" (2 Peter 3:13). He goes on to explain what this means. It will be existence "in which righteousness dwells." Saint Peter further states that this will come to pass on "the day of the Lord," the day when God's promises will be fulfilled and "all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9-10).

The events described in all three readings unfold because of God's merciful love of all. It is for such a day that we are called to prepare. Are we willing to exert the effort? Are we willing to listen to God's words? †

Sunday Readings

Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11

Go up onto a high mountain, /
Zion, herald of good news!

2 Peter 3:8-14

The Lord...is patient with you, not wishing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

Mark 1:1-8

"Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way."

***There will be
a new beginning:
new heavens and
a new earth.***



A Word from Pope Francis

Today there is need for people to be witnesses to the mercy and tenderness of God, who spurs the resigned, enlivens the disheartened, ignites the fire of hope....So many situations require our comforting witness. To be joyful, comforting people....We are all called to comfort our brothers and sister.

ANGELUS, ROME, DECEMBER 7, 2014



REFLECTION
QUESTIONS
QUESTIONS
REFLECTION

- Is there a change you need to make?
- Have you asked God for help?

Christmas During WW II

Editor's note: This article appeared in Liguorian in December 1944, when Americans were struggling with issues many face today.

Shopping for Christmas will not be much fun this year. To inject something new into the spirit of Christmas despite the shortage of gifts at hand, we have a few suggestions. First of all, make this Christmas more than ever the season of peace by remembering some of the persons whom, ordinarily, you would not remember at all. For instance, that relative you dislike and who has never remembered you. Those neighboring children who get on your nerves. Your boss, whom everybody in the office calls "an old bear." The man with whom you had a political argument which left you both glaring at one another. Perhaps you could send a card to say in effect, "I'm not holding any grudges. Let's be friends."

Don't forget the value of good books



as Christmas presents. People have been sobered into much reading by war; they have unusual opportunities for it because of the difficulties of travel and other kinds of amusement. Watch the Catholic magazine book lists for suggestions in this line. Help to scatter far and wide the

good books that not only provide pleasure and amusement but help people live wisely and fully.

Lastly, with whatever gift you send to a friend, include a note promising that you will be remembering him or her especially at Christmas Mass. Maybe, that way, somebody who has forgotten will suddenly be brought back to the realization that Christmas is nothing without its spiritual significance and spiritual realities; maybe, even, somebody will be led back to God through your reminder. †



*Lord Jesus, so that we may be witnesses to your presence among us, we pray—
Be born in us,
be born in our world.*

The Redemptorists

Signs of the Season—Part II: Beggars

Paige Byrne Shortal

Beggars had a place in ancient times—it was a kind of profession, albeit a lowly one. Today, except for the pleasant clang of the bell outside stores, many of us encounter beggars only on social media or through the mail.

We used to toss all those beggar letters in the recycle bin, unopened and disregarded. Then a few years ago our family started doing something different. Throughout the weeks of

Advent, we save every appeal letter. After our Sunday family dinner with the Advent wreath candles still lit, we open those letters one by one. Our older children read the letters aloud while I prepare the envelopes and the youngest child affixes the stamps. My husband writes checks to each one. Usually, they're only for five dollars each, sometimes ten or twenty for an effort we want to support in a special way. We say a Hail Mary for each effort.

Children are beset by the world's

problems and feel powerless to do anything about them. They need their adults to show that they care and to take the lead in making some kind of response. Our small donations are but drops in the bucket, but at least for a moment we don't ignore the human suffering that is presented to us. It's worth a few dollars and a little time, rather than simply stepping over the beggar on the sidewalk—or the one in the mailbox. †



WEEKDAY READINGS

December 11–16

Monday, Advent Weekday:

Is 35:1–10 / Lk 5:17–26

Tuesday, Our Lady of Guadalupe:

Zec 2:14–17 or Rv 11:19a; 12:1–6a,
10ab / Lk 1:26–38 or Lk 1:39–47

Wednesday, St. Lucy:

Is 40:25–31 / Mt 11:28–30

Thursday, St. John of the Cross:

Is 41:13–20 / Mt 11:11–15

Friday, Advent Weekday:

Is 48:17–19 / Mt 11:16–19

Saturday, Advent Weekday:

Sir 48:1–4, 9–11 / Mt 17:9a, 10–13

Sunday, Dec 10, 2023

A voice cries out

This year the Universal Declaration of Human Rights turns 75. The world could use a reminder that human rights belong to each of us and must be defended without exception. We live in an age marred by misinformation. Attacks on others grow more destructive online and in our common spaces. Climate change, hunger, and poverty are unequally borne by those whose rights are not recognized or protected. Advent is the perfect time to identify the rights that resonate most powerfully for you. Claim them. Discover ways to stand up for them. Create alliances with those whose rights are in jeopardy.

SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT

TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 40:1-5, 9-11; 2 Peter 3:8-14; Mark 1:1-8 (5). *"In the desert prepare the way of the LORD! Make straight in the wasteland a highway for our God!"*

Monday, Dec 11, 2023

Backstory on the Bible

The 73 books in the Catholic Bible were written hundreds, and in some cases thousands, of years before they were officially compiled. It wasn't until the late fourth century that the Catholic Church decided upon the list of sacred scripture to be included. Pope Damasus I presided over the Council of Rome of 382 that determined the scriptural canon, and he commissioned Saint Jerome to translate these texts from Greek into Latin. This collection of sacred books is the inspired word of God, reveals the truth of Revelation, and forms the core of Catholic beliefs. Pass on the Good News!

MEMORIAL OF DAMASUS I, POPE

TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 35:1-10; Luke 5:17-26 (181). *"We have seen incredible things today."*

Tuesday, Dec 12, 2023

Mysterious mother of the Americas

On a wall, under glass, is the life-sized image of Our Lady of Guadalupe—enshrined in the Basilica of Guadalupe, on Tepeyac Hill in Mexico City, where Our Lady appeared to Juan Diego in December 1591. As mysterious and symbolic as the Woman of the Apocalypse described in Revelation 12, it continues to defy human explanation, including analysis from a NASA scientist. The humble cactus fiber cloak it appears on hasn't deteriorated in more than 400 years, nor has the image, which experts from Kodak likened to a photograph though photography wasn't invented yet. Countless miracles are associated with Guadalupe, but the greatest is the conversion of an entire continent. Pray for the people of the Americas with the Center of Concern prayer to Our Lady of Guadalupe that begins: Hail Mary, Lady of Peace, We pray for the peace in our world; make us peacemakers.

FEAST OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

TODAY'S READINGS: Zechariah 2:14-17 or Revelation 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab; Luke 1:26-38 or Luke 1:39-47 (690A). *"A great sign appeared in the sky, a woman clothed with the sun."*

Wednesday, Dec 13, 2023

Keep your eye on the divine

Like many early Roman saints, little is known about Saint Lucy. Tradition says that her eyes were removed in an act of torture before her death for being a Christian. As such, she is the patron saint of the blind. We often take sight for granted, but Lucy should remind us, especially in hard times, to look beyond our own vision

—and see with God's eyes. The reward for our faithful acts is the beatific vision. Or as Saint Paul puts it: "We see now in a glass darkly, but then face to face" (1 Cor. 13:12). Work to improve your vision.

MEMORIAL OF LUCY, MARTYR

TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 40:25-31; Matthew 11:28-30 (183). *"Lift up your eyes on high and see who has created these things."*

Thursday, Dec 14, 2023

He wasn't afraid of the dark

Today is the memorial of Saint John of the Cross, a Spanish Carmelite mystic, poet, and reformer who died in 1591. He may be best known for *Dark Night of the Soul*, which develops the idea that suffering—including the sense of God's absence—can actually lead to unity with God. "The endurance of darkness is the preparation for great light," he wrote. John came to his insights through experience, having been maltreated and even imprisoned by his own religious community. If God ever seems far away, let John of the Cross guide you to the light.

MEMORIAL OF JOHN OF THE CROSS, PRIEST, DOCTOR OF THE CHURCH

TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 41:13-20; Matthew 11:11-15 (184). *"Whoever has ears ought to hear."*

Friday, Dec 15, 2023

The secret to our success

Damned if you do, damned if you don't. That is Jesus' complaint about public opinion. John the Baptist fasted and they called him crazy. Jesus feasted and they called him a glutton and drunkard. We've all been there. The best response to criticism is success. What is success in the spiritual life? "In God's will, there is great peace" is the answer Saint Josephine Bakhita offers. Wise words. Ignore your critics, and follow Jesus' path to peace.

ADVENT WEEKDAY

TODAY'S READINGS: Isaiah 48:17-19; Matthew 11:16-19 (185). *"Wisdom is vindicated by her works."*

Saturday, Dec 16, 2023

Modernism gets its say

Maude Petre, who died on this date in 1937, was a British writer and religious sister best known for her work on Catholic modernism. She was a prolific author, writing on a wide range of topics, including theology, philosophy, politics, and literature. She openly supported women's suffrage, which the church opposed at the time. Her 1907 book *Catholicism and Independence* got her kicked out of her order and she was refused the sacraments by her bishop. Her views were controversial, but they helped form Catholic thinking for the Second Vatican Council. Prayerfully consider that the Catholic controversies of today may lead to the church of tomorrow.

ADVENT WEEKDAY

TODAY'S READINGS: Sirach 48:1-4, 9-11; Matthew 17:9a, 10-13 (186). *"Elijah will indeed come and restore all things; but I tell you that Elijah has already come."*

Invest just five minutes a day, and your faith will deepen and grow—a day at a time



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