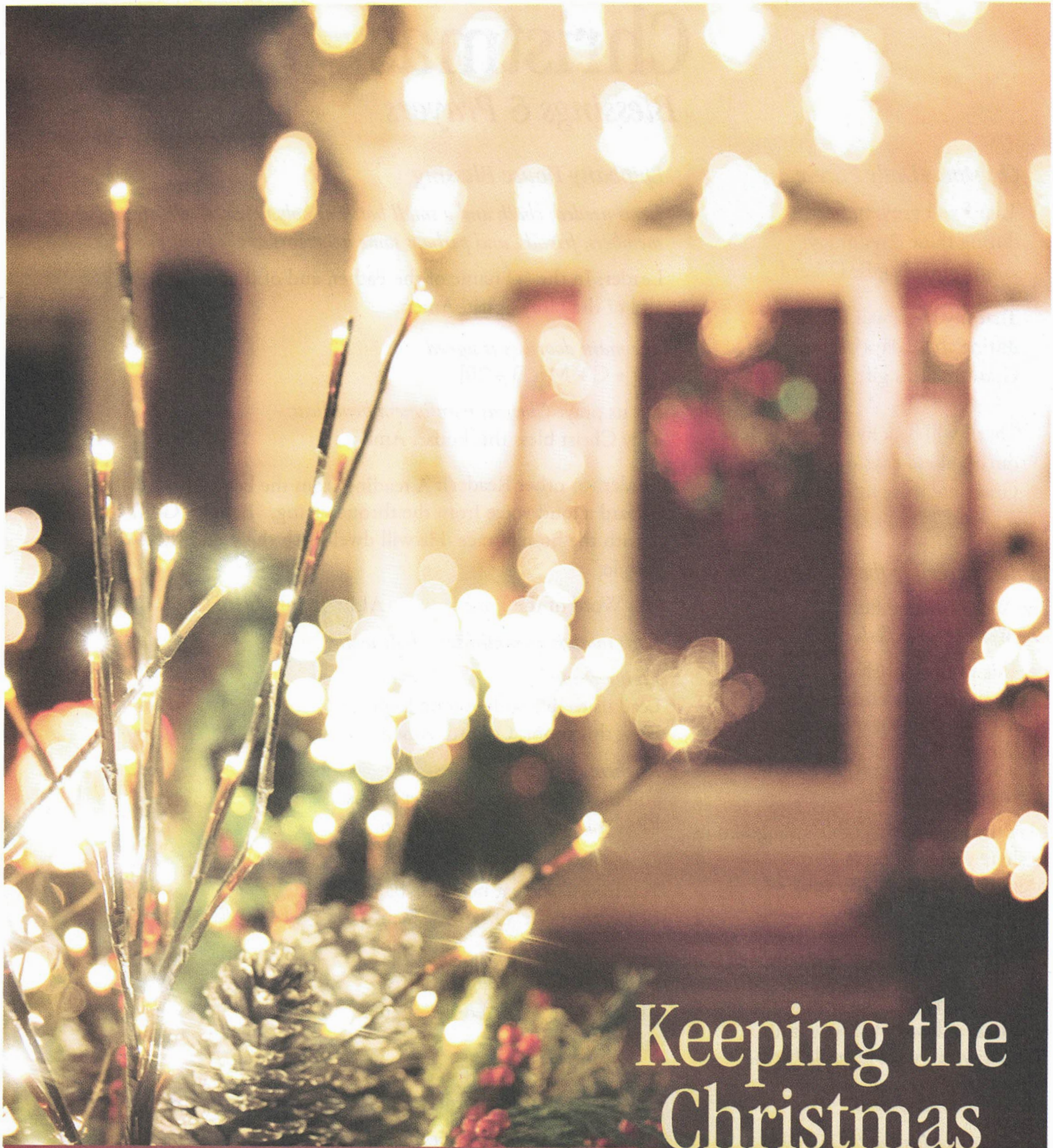

Keeping the Christmas Season at Home

December 25, 2019 – January 12, 2020

Christmas
Blessings & Prayers

Christmas Daily Prayer

That I will grow in faith
during these days of joy:
Grant me this gift, O Lord.

That my hope will increase
during these days of grace:
Grant me this gift, O Lord.

That I will be a living sign of love
during these days of glory.
Grant me this gift, O Lord.

Table Prayer for the Christmas Season

The Word became flesh.
The Word became flesh.

Let this meal nourish us
to live in service to others
as we celebrate your dwelling among us,
O Christ.

The Word became flesh.

May the food of this table strengthen us
to share the good news
brought to earth by the voice of
herald angels.

The Word became flesh.

Grant that this will be a season of peace,
so others will see your love in us
first shown in your humble birth.

The Word became flesh.

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Bless this meal, bless our lives
during these joyful Christmas days.
Amen.

In accordance with c. 827, permission to publish is granted on August 22, 2019, by Most Reverend Ronald A. Hicks, Vicar General of the Archdiocese of Chicago. Permission to publish is an official declaration of ecclesiastical authority that the material is free from doctrinal and moral error. No legal responsibility is assumed by the grant of this permission.

Epiphany House Blessing

Items needed: chalk and a small bottle of holy water. Gather with family members, friends, and perhaps some neighbors at the front door.

Leader: In the (+) name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The main doorway is signed
[20 + C + M + B + 20]

Let us pray: *Christus mansionem benedicat.*
May Christ bless this house. Amen.

Leader (or other Reader): A reading from the book of Revelation.
I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, God's dwelling is with the human race. He will dwell with them and they will be his people."

The Word of the Lord ALL: Thanks be to God!

Each room is sprinkled with holy water.

Living room:
Lead us to live with you on high.
Bless this room, O Lord. Amen.

Kitchen:
You have prepared a banquet for us.
Bless this room, O Lord. Amen.

Dining room:
You feed us at that heavenly banquet.
Bless this room, O Lord. Amen.

Bedrooms:
In you alone do we rest secure.
Bless this room, O Lord. Amen.

Bathroom:
You cleanse us from the stain of sin.
Bless this room, O Lord. Amen.

All return to the front door to pray together.

Our Father . . .

All are sprinkled with holy water.

Bless this household through all days to come, Father, Son,
and Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. Amen.

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Saint Peter Church

4 South 5th Street • Coplay, Pennsylvania 18037

Fourth Sunday of Advent
December 22, 2019

Mission Statement

We, as a Catholic parish under the patronage of Saint Peter, are a Eucharistic family, centered in prayer and worship, dedicated to self-sacrificing stewardship, and journeying together, Spirit-inspired, to the heavenly Kingdom.

PARISH STAFF

PASTOR: Rev. Msgr. John J. Martin
PASTOR EMERITUS: Rev. Msgr. William E. Handges
PERMANENT DEACONS: Thomas Reimer, Maurice Kelly
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Mrs. Lina Abi-Samra
PARISH ACCOUNTANT: Mr. Michael Leshko
DIRECTOR OF REL. ED.: Mrs. Linda Johnson
DIOCESAN VICTIM ASSISTANCE COORDINATOR:
Ms. Wendy Krisak, Direct Telephone 1 800-791-9209
Email: victimassistance@allentowndiocese.org
DIOCESAN SAFE ENVIRONMENT OFFICE:
Sr. Meg, S.S.J.M.S., LMFT 610-332-0442 Ext. 2019

MASS SCHEDULE:

DAILY: 8 A.M. *(No morning Mass Thursday & Saturday)*
Saturday Evening: 4:00 P.M. Sunday: 8:00 & 10:30 A.M.
Holy Days Vigil: 6:30 P.M.
Holy Days: 8:00 A.M. & 6:30 P.M.

PENANCE:

Saturday: 3:00 to 3:45 P.M.
During Advent and Lent, Communal Penance Services are celebrated. Arrangements can always be made by appointment.

BAPTISM: Contact the rectory for an appointment. Baptism is scheduled on Sunday after the 10:30 A.M. Mass at 11:30 A.M. Parents may be required to attend a preparatory instruction in the rectory.

MARRIAGE: Couples should contact the parish priest at least 1 year but no later than 6 months prior to the

ANOINTING OF THE SICK: Notify the rectory when someone at home becomes seriously ill, or weak on account of old age, so that the person might receive this Sacrament.

COMMUNION TO THE HOMEBOUND: The priests and Eucharistic Ministers perform this service monthly. Notify us when someone wishes to be visited.

HOSPITALIZED: Alert us whenever someone has to be hospitalized, especially when their admission is an emergency. The parish identification number at each of the Valley hospitals is #171.

PARISH REGISTRATION: New members should make an appointment with the pastor at the rectory. Any change of an address, notify the rectory.

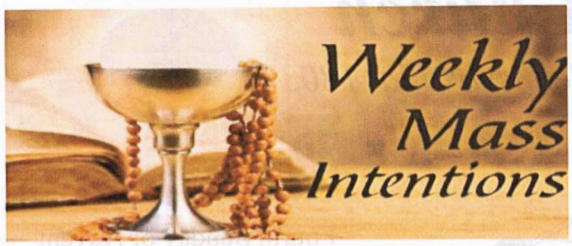
HIGH SCHOOL: Allentown Central Catholic, 4th & Chew Sts., Allentown 18102 (School Office: 610-437-4601)

ELEMENTARY:

Good Shepherd Catholic School
Mrs. Susan Parker, M.Ed. Principal
1300 Newport Avenue, Northampton, PA 18067
610-262-9171

CCD PROGRAM: Classes conducted at the Holy Apostles Catholic Education Center, 3008 Ruch St., Whitehall. The program is from September to the end of April. These classes are necessary for eligibility to receive the Sacraments of Penance, Eucharist and Confirmation. Contact Mrs. Linda Johnson at 610-261-0144

Rectory: 610-262-2417 Fax: 610-262-2652
Web Address: www:stpeterchurchcoplay.com • E-mail: info@stpetersrccoplay.com



Sunday Dec. 22nd: Fourth Sunday of Advent
Is 7:10-14; Rom 1:1-7; Mt 1:18-24
8:00AM- *Michael Yaroma*
10:30AM- *Frank and Mary Sinkovits & son William*

Monday Dec. 23rd: Late Advent Weekday
Mal 3:1-4, 23-24; Lk 1:57-66
8:00 AM- *Betty Garger*

Tuesday Dec. 24th: Late Advent Weekday
2 Sm 7:1-5,8b-12,14a,16; Lk 1:67-79
8:00AM- *Parishioners of St. Peter*

CHRISTMAS

Tuesday Vigil
Is 62:1-5; Acts 13:16-17,22-25; Mt 1:1-25
4:00PM- *August Ivankovits*
10:30PM- *Christmas Envelope Remembrances*

Wednesday Dec. 25th: The Nativity of the Lord
Is 62:11-12,Ti3:4-7; Lk 2:15-20
9:30AM- *Celebrant's Intentions*

Thursday Dec. 26th: Saint Stephen, The First Martyr
Acts 6:8-10, 7:54-59; Mt 10:17-22
No Morning Mass

Friday Dec. 27th: St. John, Apostle and Evangelist
1Jn 1:1-4; Jn 20:1a, 2-8
8:00 AM- *St. Peter's Shut-Ins*

Saturday Dec. 28th: The Holy Innocents, Martyrs
1Jn 1:5-2:2; Mt 2:13-18

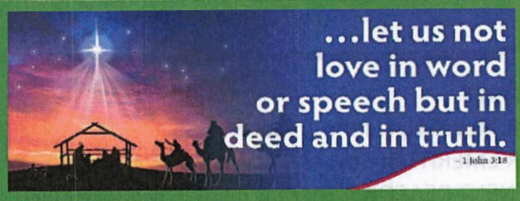
Vigil Mass
4:00 PM- *John Toth (Anniversary)*

Sunday Dec 29th: The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph
8:00AM- *Stephan and Mary Pultz*
10:30AM- *Henry Lokay*

Sanctuary Lamp
Will burn this week in memory of
Michael Hamscher

Masses said by Retired Priests and Missionaries:
Health: *Fran Nagy*
Deceased: *Richard Hamscher, Theresa Brown, Stephen Steirer, Alfred Lederer, John Toth, Agnes Schleder*

Stewardship Corner
December 15, 2019
$6094.00
Thanks to those who have made a commitment during our increased offertory process. May our renewed stewardship be to the honor and glory of the Lord



Flame of Love *Tuesdays- Rosary and Benediction in the Chapel from 6-7:30PM*

Bible Study *Thursdays 6:30PM in the Heritage Center. Will resume on 1/9/2020*

Solemnity of Mary Mother of God
Tuesday December 31st 4PM
Wednesday January 1st 9:30AM

Lucky Calendars *~As luck would have it, we have a few calendars for 2020 available for sale in the rectory. If you would like to purchase one please stop in during business hours.*

Monsignor Martin, Deacon Tom, Deacon Maurice and all our staff here at Saint Peter Parish wish you and your families a blessed and happy Christmas and New Year!

Good News

The doors into the church from the elevator vestibule were recently automated to make the church more accessible to those who use wheelchairs and walkers

Whitehall-Coplay Free Community Meals

Saint Peter will be hosting the free Community Meal on January 5, 2020. We are asking our parishioners for monetary donations in lieu of food items to help defray some of the costs of the meal. If you are able to help, please put your donation in an envelope labeled Community Meal. You may drop off your donation in the Sunday Collection Basket or at the rectory

Office Closing
The Office will be closed
December 24, 25, & 26 for Christmas
And
December 31 and January 1st

School News

GOOD SHEPHERD CATHOLIC SCHOOL
School Closed and will reopen 1/2

ALLENTOWN CENTRAL CATHOLIC H.S.
School Closed and will reopen on 1/2

HOLY APOSTLES RELIGIOUS ED
No classes 12/23-1/2
Regular classes resume 1/6-8, 2020
Please note date change:
1/ 9 First Communion Parents Mtg. 6:30 PM St. Peter

Area Events

Immaculate Conception Church, Allentown is looking to fill a part-time Secretarial position. It Requires Computer skills (Windows 10 & Microsoft Office). Answer phones, detail oriented, and must work well with others. Interested please call 610-433-4404

St. Mary's in Catty is looking for a part-time maintenance Person. 15 hr./week please send email of interest to kim.stmarys122@gmail.com

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TIS THE SEASON FOR GIVING

Remember to take a tag(s)from our **Giving Tree** located in the main vestibule. Donations will be sent to Catholic Charities. Please drop off your unwrapped gifts in the boxes, and gift cards may be dropped off in the collection basket. The wonderful generosity of our parishioners is greatly appreciated by all those in need.

HelpOurMarriage.org
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Retrouvaille of Delaware Valley offers hope for married couples experiencing loneliness, boredom, misery, or frustration in their marriage. Couples learn valuable communication skills and rediscover intimacy. Our next program starts February 21-23 at the Family Life Center in Malvern, PA. For more information, called 215-766-3944 or 800-470-2230. All inquiries are kept strictly confidential.

"Arise, all ye nobles and peasants; Mary invites all, rich and poor, just and sinners, to enter the cave of Bethlehem, to adore and to kiss the feet of her new-born Son. Go in, then, all ye devout souls; go and see the Creator of heaven and earth on a little hay, under the form of a little Infant; but so beautiful that he sheds all around rays of light. Now that he is born and is lying on the straw, the cave is no longer horrible, but is become a paradise. Let us enter; let us not be afraid." St. Alphonsus Liguori

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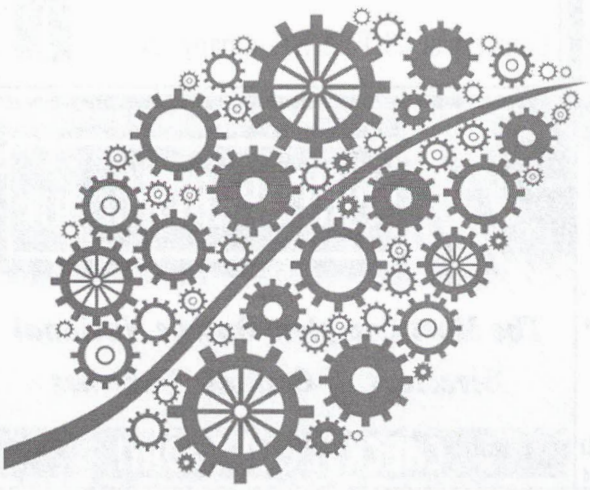
Living Sustainably *in the New Year*

Since the moment God "took the man and settled him in the garden of Eden, to cultivate and care for it" (Genesis 2:15), humanity has been entrusted with the care of creation. But the pace of modern life is frantic, and we rarely have time to consider our choices—especially in an economic system that depends on consumption, and a lot of it.

This year, make a commitment as a family to be more intentional about stewardship of creation. Here is a list of low-cost ideas for living smaller and more sustainably. Go slowly! Nothing destroys good intentions as quickly as biting off too much at once.

1. Take your own bags to the grocery store.
2. Plan errands to coincide with other activities so you can combine trips and avoid having to come and go from home multiple times in a day.
3. Buy local foods; less transport means less environmental impact.
4. Grow your own vegetables or fruits; plant a tree or two.
5. Compost kitchen waste, leaves, and grass clippings.
6. Wash and reuse resealable bags.
7. Bring home fast-food plastics (cups, utensils, trays) to wash and recycle—or better yet, reuse.
8. Turn off the car instead of idling while waiting in pickup lines, outside kids' activities, or while checking your phone.
9. Turn off electronics after a certain hour, or for a full evening each week: computers, tablets, phones, televisions . . . Read a book, institute family game night, or take a walk and get to know your neighbors.
10. Buy bulk refills of cleaning products instead of a new pump bottle every time.
11. When shopping for school or work clothes, start at consignment stores and fill in as necessary with new clothing.
12. Turn the lights off when you leave the room; put the computer to sleep when not in use.
13. Adjust the thermostat in the house up a degree or two in summer, down a degree or two in winter.
14. Go through kids' school folders to find papers with blank back sides that can be used for printing.
15. Replace parts of your lawn with native plants—wildflowers, low-maintenance ground cover, and so on—so mowing takes less time and uses less energy.



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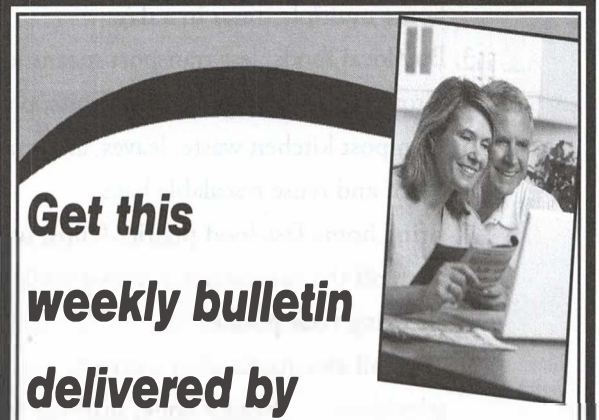

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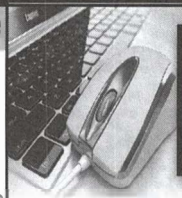

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KEEPING WATCH

Meditations for Advent | Week 4

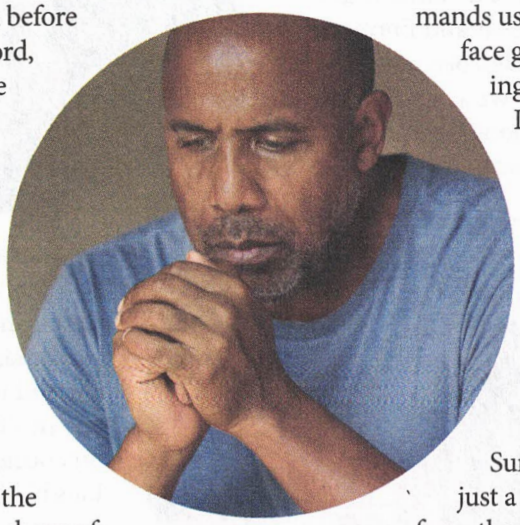
Awaiting Emmanuel

Spend Time Listening

Isaiah 7:10–14; Romans 1:1–7; Matthew 1:18–25

Behold. Listen. Because, after a pregnancy that quietly changed the course of history, and a dream in the night that quietly changed history again, a baby is going to be born in a small stable, amid the hushed rustles and deep sighs of the animals slumbering in the dark.

Behold the calm before the arrival of the Lord, a child who will one day take the world by storm.



Behold the power that could move mountains and part seas, as its thunderous strength is corralled into the mewing and cooing of an infant. It is magnificent all the more for taking the shape of vulnerability, humility, and love.

For many of us, the days leading up to the Fourth Sunday of Advent have been relentlessly busy, full of parties and planning, friends and feasting, giving and doing.

So, for today, as the moment draws near, we pause to contemplate the magnitude of this greatest miracle.

It's a miracle dependent on vast reservoirs of faith — that of Mary, to say yes to the Angel Gabriel, and that of Joseph, to stay with Mary at the command of the angel in his dream.

How often do we buck the pressures of society to do as the Lord commands us, especially if we face great shame? Speaking truth is difficult. Living truth is risky. It could mean alienation, lost opportunities, or criticism. Mary and Joseph both knew that … and yet they obeyed. Could you do it?

On this final Sunday of Advent, just a few days away from the celebration of this great gift, take some time to pause amid the flurry of preparations and expectations. Maybe even say no to a few things today, so that you may say yes to the invitation to greet this new life. Spend some time listening. Behold the magnificent miracle that takes place in the quiet night.

The Celebration Doesn't End

The twelve days of Christmas aren't just the lyrics to an old carol; they are also part of Church tradition, when we wait for the coming of the three Wise Men. Look back at your plans and reflections from the four weeks of Advent and carry them forward through the Epiphany on January 6. Even better, as we described in the first week, shape your new habits into a lifestyle. Because, even when the Christmas season has ended, we still are watching and waiting for the day when he comes again!

POINTS TO PONDER

- Can you think of a time when it was risky or scary to say yes to Jesus' call? What did you do?
- How can you carve out some calm to behold the coming of Christ?
- Do you know someone who is a model of strength and courage on behalf of God?

What's in a Name?

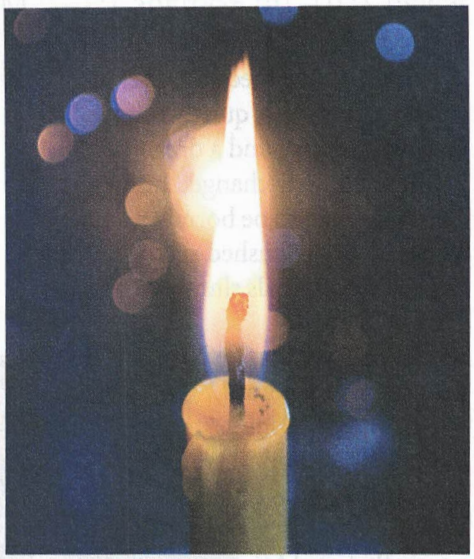
Today's Gospel tells us that Christ will be called Emmanuel, meaning, "God is with us" (Mt 1:23). This fulfills a prophecy by Isaiah: "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign; the young woman, pregnant and about to bear a son, shall name him Emmanuel" (Is 7:14).

The Gospel also says that Joseph called the baby Jesus, as instructed by the angel, for "he will save his people from their sins" (Mt 1:21).

While "Jesus" may have been the name his friends and family used in the usual way we think of a name, both of Christ's names — Jesus and Emmanuel — describe his roles, becoming man and saving man. As we await Emmanuel during Advent, we look forward to that time when God is with us here on earth.

Awaiting *Together*

Perhaps one of the most memorable traditions you can establish during Advent is carving out time for quiet. I have deeply spiritual memories of riding to Christmas Eve Mass with my sisters and parents in a silent car, through dark and silent streets, when everything closed early to honor the holiday. It lent a special intimacy and anticipation to the near arrival of Jesus. How might you behold him? Perhaps …



- Turn off the lamps and dine by the light of all four Advent wreath candles now through Christmas.
- Spend ten minutes each day in silence, meditating on courage, Jesus' miraculous birth, or God's call for you.
- If you haven't already, set up a Nativity scene in your home. Invite members of your family to describe elements of the scene as they might imagine it.

Raising Your Hand

"Be generous in answering Jesus' call inviting you to put out into the deep and become his witnesses, discovering the trust he puts in you to devise a future together with him," Pope St. John Paul II said in a 2003 address to young people. "To fulfill this mission the Church is entrusting to you requires that you cultivate a genuine life of prayer nourished by the sacraments, especially the Eucharist and confession."

Prayer and the sacraments help inform our understanding of what the Lord commands, to discern what we're asked to do, and how and when we should speak out. And the Father will be by our sides to give us strength and courage to say yes.

An Advent Prayer

Dear God, be near me and give me strength and courage when I go out into the world to do your will. May my yes be as unshakeable as Joseph and Mary's. I'm listening for your call. Amen.

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