



Presentation Press

Our Lady of the Presentation Church

November 2010 • Vol. 7 • No. 3

Keeping Advent This Year by Fr. Mike Clary

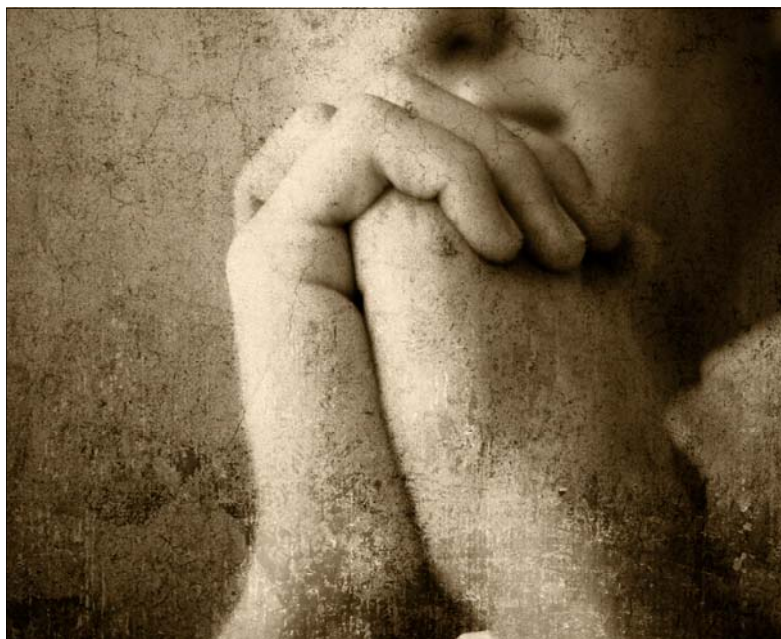
In the middle of October as I write this Advent reflection I am already seeing advertising for Christmas. Keeping the Church's season of Advent becomes an increasingly difficult thing to do because our culture is always pushing Christmas, often in a purely materialistic sense. The Gospel of Luke presents the Christ Child coming in poverty and yet it is easy to lose focus on how Jesus came and why he came.

There are some antidotes that help bring us to an awareness of the true meaning of Advent and Christmas. One is the tradition of the Advent wreath. It is a simple prayer that can help our family to refocus on what it is we celebrate this time of year. Another antidote is in thinking of others and finding ways to help.

With this reflection, I would like to suggest another way of keeping Advent this year. It is something that can help us not only during the Advent season, but throughout the course of the year. For people who are busy it is a practice that will take about 15 minutes a week. The practice I am referring to is called *Lectio Divina*, a traditional way of cultivating friendship with Christ. It is a way of listening to the texts of scripture as if we were in conversation with Christ and He was suggesting the topic of conversation. This encounter with Christ and reflection on His Word leads beyond mere acquaintanceship to an attitude of friendship, trust and love.

During the Advent season, I would suggest reading one of the scripture passages for the coming Sunday. The first step is to read the passage and see what phrase, sentence or word stands out to you. In Matthew's Gospel for the first Sunday of Advent, Jesus urges his disciples to "stay awake." It is the phrase that spoke to my heart.

The second step is to reflect on the phrase. What do I need to stay awake for? The Gospel says to stay awake because we don't know when the Lord will



come again. I wonder how many times a day I miss the Lord's presence because I am too busy about things. What would help me to be more attentive to Christ each day?

The third step is to pray. As I reflect on the phrase what prayer wells up in me? It could be a prayer of thanksgiving for those times that I am aware of God's presence. Maybe it is a prayer of petition asking God to help me be more awake during the course of the day and to see how God is with me.

The fourth step is to simply be with God for awhile. As our Deacon Del Wilkinson said in a homily recently, you don't have to say anything. As the psalm says, "Be still and know that I am God."

During the course of the week you may want to take a few minutes to think about your reflection on the Scripture passage. I know a family who asks one another, "What was the best part of your day?" It is another way of being awake to God's presence.

You will be amazed at what a difference a few minutes with your God can make.

Tuesday, Dec. 8
*Solemnity of the
Immaculate Conception
(Holy Day of Obligation)*
Masses: 6:30, 8:15 am & 6 pm

Saturday/Sunday, Dec. 11-12
The Virgin of Guadalupe Celebration
Saturday, 7 pm to Midnight
Sunday, 5 pm Mass



Advent
SEASON

Saturday, Dec. 18
La Posada
6:30 to 8:30 pm

Sunday, Dec. 19
Advent Reconciliation Service
7 pm, Church

Find Your Gift and Share It Within Your Parish

The Gonzalez family had lived in the Lee's Summit since 1994 but didn't become parishioners of Presentation until 2004. Part of the reason was that they were attending the Spanish Mass at St. Aloysius Parish in the Northeast area of Kansas City. However, the pastor died and they continued to attend for about a year but it wasn't the same. They decided to attend Presentation and eventually joined.

Angie and Rodrigo recall how big the parish community at Presentation was compared to St. Aloysius and how overwhelmed they felt. They decided to enroll their oldest son, Rodrigo in the Religious Education program so they could meet other parish families. They wanted to belong, to fit in.

"It's funny how you remember first impressions of people you meet, their words are like a footprint on your life," says Angie. "I recall talking to John Tyler about how OLP is so big and that we had come from a small church. His advice to me was, 'Get involved, you meet one person at a time.' Those words have stuck with me through the years and now my parish is not just a community but a family."

The Gonzalez family began to share their gifts in various ministries along with their three children, Rodrigo, 16, Victoria, 12 and Jason, 10. Angie and Rodrigo have been coordinators for Financial Peace University and also assist with the newly formed Hispanic Ministries. Angie is a liturgical minister and her daughter, Victoria is an altar server and both serve at the English and Spanish Masses. Rodrigo is taking a three-year course in Theology and their son Rodrigo is involved with boy scouts. The Gonzalez family were also involved with the planning of the Posada last year. Since Presentation began the



Spanish Masses, Rodrigo's sisters, Martha and Rosalia, and his mother Rosalia, have now joined the parish. Two of Rodrigo's nieces Emely and Stephanie, are altar servers at the Spanish Mass.

Angie says she feels blessed to know so many people at Presentation. "I found my talent and have used it for years, and now I have shared it many times at church and that is... being bilingual," says Angie. "I know our parish has much to offer to those who wish to be involved. I encourage others to take a moment to do a self-assessment and see what is your gift that God has given to you? I challenge you to share your gift with our church family. It will change your life! I know because we have changed too."

† Parishioners since 2004

† Married 20 years

† Parents of 3 children

† Ministries

EM Altar & Sick and Homebound, Altar Server

Hispanic Ministry

Confirmation Catechist

FPU Coordinators

Children's Faith Formation

Boy Scouts

Strengthening Households of Faith

Making the most of Advent by Tony Butel

As Advent approaches we are invited to be more attuned to God's desire to bring humanity to God's self. This may prove to be a challenging task when our attention is occupied with work or school responsibilities, family chores and relationships, activities (ours or our children's) and perhaps fractured relationships with others. How is Christ's coming Good News?

The Church offers us opportunities to quiet ourselves in the midst of our busy lives and let God speak of His love for us. There are many Advent resources available for our use. If you have access to a computer, search Catholic Advent activities and you will be provided with many resource web sites. Here are a few from USCCB.org/Advent.

Family Advent Activities:

First Week: Make and bless the family Advent Wreath. For instructions on how to make an Advent Wreath you can go to <http://catholicism.about.com>. Click on *Advent and Christmas*, then click on *How to make an Advent Wreath*.

Second Week: Write Christmas cards to loved ones. Involve the whole family. Make sure to tell stories about the recipients who receive the cards.

Third Week: Bake Christmas cookies. Share some with neighbors or shut-ins.

Fourth Week: Deliver gifts to a local shelter, refugee center or crisis pregnancy center. Rather than just dropping the package off, spend some time learning about the work of the facility. For a list of family activities for each day of Advent, go to www.usccb.org/Advent/.

We will continue to offer ways to Strengthen Households of Faith in our parish through the bulletin, newsletter and website.

In 1531 Mary appeared to an Indian named Juan Diego in Tepeyac, Mexico. When asked by the bishop to produce proof of her appearance, he presented his cloak upon which the Virgin had emblazoned her image. Our Lady of the Guadalupe is patroness of the Americas.



*Join us in the Celebration of
The Virgin of Guadalupe
Saturday, December 11
7 pm to Midnight
&
Sunday, December 12
at the 5 pm Mass*

The celebration includes:

- Special dance with the Matachines
- Rosary
- Groups, bands, mariachis are invited to donate their time to sing to the Virgen of Guadalupe
- Prayers to the Virgen of Guadalupe
- Rest and eat Mexican bread and Mexican chocolate
- Sunday, December 12, the Matachines will dance for the Virgen of Guadalupe before and after the 5:00 p.m. Mass.



*La Posada
Saturday, December 18
6:30 to 8:30 pm*

All are invited to a presentation of La Posada. We will meet at the church and then share a meal with our parish family. We will conclude the evening with a Piñata for kids.



Giving Tree Service Project

During the Advent season, Presentation Parish offers a parish-wide service project known as the "Giving Trees." Beginning the weekend of November 20-21, the trees are placed in the gathering space with special gift tags on them. Parishioners are invited to take a gift tag from a tree and donate the item listed. Donated items must be placed back under the giving trees with the gift tag attached by Sunday, Dec. 19. Items received after this date cannot be guaranteed delivery by Christmas. The donated items should NOT be wrapped, however gift bags are acceptable. This special service project is a great way to get the whole family involved in helping those in need. Donations will benefit Lee's Summit Social Services and residents in Lee's Summit area Care Centers.



Our Lady of the
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Please notify the Parish
Office of address changes.

Vision Statement

Our Lady of the Presentation is a vibrant, Eucharist-centered community offering all Catholics participation in sacraments, social action and Christian education.

Mission Statement

To share our gifts by providing opportunities for spiritual growth in worship, service, education and community activities, is our mission.

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125th Anniversary Concert



*Saturday,
November 20
7:00 pm
in the Church*

Reception following the concert in the Mulligan Rooms.

As we bring our 125th Anniversary Year to a close, you are invited to join us for an evening of sacred music commemorating the Catholic community of Lee's Summit. The highlight of the concert will be John Rutter's Requiem and will feature singers from Presentation and Holy Spirit parishes, along with Karen Engebretson, organist at Redemptorist Church.

Christmas Mass Schedule



*Friday, December 24
Christmas Eve Masses:
4 pm Masses in the Church & Gym
6 pm Masses: Church (English)
Gym (Spanish)
8 & 10 pm: Church
Saturday, December 25
Christmas Day Mass: 10 am*