

MASS TIMES

MONDAY-FRIDAY

7:00 am

9:30 am (livestreamed)

School Mass: Wednesdays, 8:15 am

SATURDAY

9:30 am (livestreamed)

VIGIL MASS

4:30 pm

SUNDAY

7:30 am 9:30 am (livestreamed) 11:30 am

11:30 am 5:00 pm

CONFESSION

THURSDAY

5:00-6:00 pm

SATURDAY

8:00-9:30 am 3:00-4:30 pm

SUNDAY

30 min before Masses

PARISH OFFICE HOURS:

MONDAY-FRIDAY: 8 am-5 pm

FRONT DESK:

MONDAY-FRIDAY: 8 am-8 pm SATURDAY: 8 am-3:30 pm

Phone: (303) 469-5171 Fax: (303) 469-5172 School: (303) 466-4177

900 W. Midway Blvd. Broomfield, CO 80020



SACRISTY LAUNDRY

Cecilia Bruchez

COLLECTION COUNTERS Wed, Dec 27 | 10 am

Susan Martinez Kay Boyer Don Larson Steve Moser

ADORATION

IN THE CHURCH: THURSDAY

12:00-6:00 pm SOLEMN HOLY HOUR:

5:00-6:00 pm with Confession and Vespers

Benediction: 5:55 pm

IN THE CHAPEL:

FOR SCHEDULED ADORERS,
SEE AVAILABLE HOURS AND SIGN UP AT

WWW.nool.us/adoration

OPEN FOR WALK-INS **MONDAY-FRIDAY** 8:00 am-5:00 pm



Scan to sign up for adoration

OFFICE/FRONT DESK & ADORATION CHAPEL HOLIDAY CLOSURE

- SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23
- MONDAY, DECEMBER 25
- TUESDAY, DECEMBER 26
- MONDAY, JANUARY 1, 2024

VISITING THE SICK AND HOMEBOUND

Do you know or do you have someone in your family who is sick or homebound, cannot attend Sunday Mass regularly, and desires to receive sacraments of penance and Eucharist? Please do not hesitate to contact Nativity to schedule a visit of a priest or Eucharistic minister at (303) 469-5171.

GOING TO THE HOSPITAL

If you are going to the hospital and need a visit from a priest or deacon, please call the front desk at (303) 469-5171.

PRAYER REQUESTS

If you have any prayer requests, please contact Joanne Farver at (303) 466-8859 or at joannefarver@comcast.net.

MASS INTENTIONS

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23

9:30 am Mac J. Rizzo, Birthday by Gary and Sally Thomas

4:30 pm + Gerald and Mary Coufal

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24

7:30 am † Tillie, Marlene, and Edward

Fitterer by Sally Fitterer People of the Parish

9:30 am People of the Parish 11:30 am † Robert Bruck by Mary Ann

& Ken Cole

There is no 5:00 pm Mass

CHRISTMAS EVE

4:00 pm † James, Elizabeth, and Betty

Doyle by Sally Fitterer

6:00 pm † John Cook by Alma Cordova

8:00 pm Souls in Purgatory by Alma Cordova

10:00 pm † Alex Welch

by Mari & Dan Welch

MONDAY, DECEMBER 25

CHRISTMAS DAY

7:30 am † Bob Dankey by The Deans

9:30 am People of the Parish 11:30 am † Khuyen Hudson

by Son and Granddaughters

There is no 5:00 pm Mass

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 26

7:00 am † Helen Mapalad

by Eileen Albanese

9:30 am † Liancheng Gu by Mandi Yu

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27

7:00 am † Erlinda Alanda

by Ron & Maryann Reyes

9:30 am † Raleigh Kern

by Niemi Family

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 28

7:00 am † Erlinda Alanda by Linda Kent

9:30 am † Elizabeth Giordano by Gwen Pomper

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 29

7:00 am Marty Gallagher by Mary Baylie

9:30 am Lynn Gallagher by Mary Baylie

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30

9:30 am † Abel Ramos by Kathleen

4:30 pm † Kathleen Jansen by Mary Baylie

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31

7:30 am Boris Navarrete

by Veronica Harris 9:30 am People of the Parish

11:30 am Courtney & Ryan Meneghin

by Mary Baylie

5:00 pm † Alex Welch

by Mari & Dan Welch

Dear Parishioners,

This year, the Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve fall on the same date. View the schedule below to fulfill your Sunday Mass and Christmas Obligation.

4TH SUNDAY OF ADVENT SCHEDULE

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23
4:30 PM (VIGIL MASS)
SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24
7:30 AM, 9:30 AM, 11:30 AM
There is no 5:00 pm Mass

All Masses listed above fulfill the Fourth Sunday of Advent Obligation only.

CHURCH SANCTUARY CLOSURE

12:45 PM TO 3:00 PM in preparation for Christmas Masses



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24

CHRISTMAS EVE 4 PM, 6 PM, 8 PM, 10 PM

MONDAY, DECEMBER 25

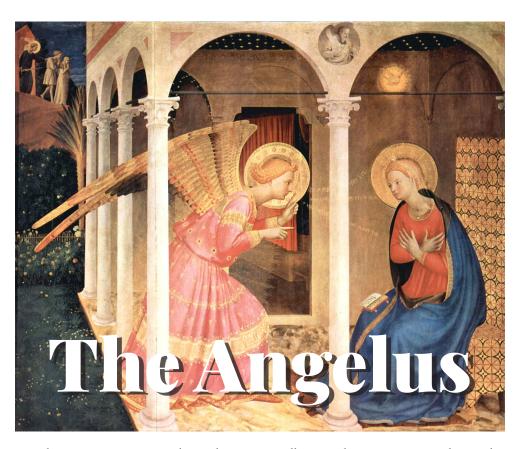
7:30 AM, 9:30 AM, 11:30 AM *There is no 5:00 pm Mass*

The 9:30 Mass will be livestreamed.

All Masses listed above fulfill the Christmas Holy Day Obligation.

NO CONFESSION ON CHRISTMAS

CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS DAY MASSES WILL **NOT** BE PRECEDED BY CONFESSION.



On Christmas Day, at noon sharp, the pope usually opens his apartment window and looks down at Saint Peter's Square. Tens of thousands of people are there, awaiting the prayer of the Angelus and the solemn blessing *Urbi et Orbi*, to the city of Rome and to the world. The prayer of the Angelus is particularly indicated to celebrate the incarnation of the Lord:

V. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary, R. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit.

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed are thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

V. Behold the handmaid of the Lord, R. Be it done unto me according to your Word.

Hail Mary...

V. And the Word was made flesh, R. And dwelt among us.

Hail Mary...

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God, R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray. Pour forth, we beseech you, O Lord, your grace into our hearts: that we, to whom the Incarnation of Christ your Son was made known by the message of an Angel, may by his Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of his Resurrection. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

The Angelus originated in the Middle Ages as a devotional practice for laypeople living near the great monasteries of Europe to help them follow the prayer example of those who lived monastic lives. The Angelus mirrored the regularly scheduled, structured prayer of the monks and nuns who pause their daily work to recall salvation in Christ and to offer praise.

During Easter, Catholics set aside the Angelus and pray instead the Regina Caelias a prayer of praise to God for the Resurrection.

The Angelus developed out of our religious ancestors' ardent desire both to honor the role of the Virgin Mary in salvation history and to practice a devotion that made the grace of the Incarnation real.

This is what our Catholic predecessors experienced as far back as the fourteenth century in praying the Angelus. Pausing three times each day to meditate on the Incarnation revealed God's presence in their daily lives. They were not seeking private revelatory experiences so much as an outward acknowledgment of their unity with Christ and with each other. The church bells would ring, and a community of people, though separated by space, was united through prayer and sacred time. The Word dwelt among them even as they went about the duties of everyday life. When we pray the Angelus, we are united not only with others who pray this prayer each day but with countless of the faithful over the centuries who have dedicated short moments of their day in unison with the whole Church to acknowledge and honor God's presence.

The Ave Maria, known in English as the Hail Mary, took on a devotional formula sometime in the eleventh century. It first echoes the words of the angel Gabriel during the Annunciation. His words praise Mary as "full of grace" and offer assurance that "the Lord is with" her (see Lk 1:28). These words are followed by the words Elizabeth said to Mary at the visitation: "Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus" (see Lk 1:42). The second half of the Hail Mary, our petition for her prayers, was added around the time of the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century and is not drawn directly from scripture.

The Angelus is a meditation on the meaning and importance of the Annunciation and Incarnation in our world today. The call and response

prayers remind us of the faith of the . Virgin Mary and petition her to pray that we experience the spiritual benefits of the Incarnation, to become more like her at the Annunciation and to experience more deeply the reality of the Incarnation that the angel's announcement initiated.

I invite you to pray this beautiful prayer with your families, especially during Christmas and before Sunday lunch. Have a blessed Christmas!

Fr. Matteo Invernizzi, FSCB

(Excerpts from Jared Dees, *Praying the Angelus*)

ARE YOU A REGISTERED PARISHIONER?

It is not uncommon for people to come to Mass regularly and not be registered as parishioners.

We would like to encourage all to register. In Christianity, the term "parish" denotes the Church community living in the Kingdom of God now in this world with a view to its fulfillment in the heavenly Kingdom. When we register with a parish we acknowledge that it is our wish to travel down this road of Life and Faith with a particular community. Living in a culture that no longer supports religious values, the local parish plays an integral role in helping to guide and support us through its educational and formational programs, celebrations of the Word, and Sacraments. By these means, the parish helps us grow in wisdom and love for the Lord and embraces the infinite needs of our hearts.

To register, go to our website home page, www.nool.us, where you will find a registration link or use the direct registration link below. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to call Diane Denfeld at 303-469-5171.

NOOL.CCBCHURCH.COM/GOTO/ FORMS/8/RESPONSES/NEW



PARISH CALENDAR

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23 FRONT DESK/OFFICE CLOSED

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24

11:00 am | Parishioners' Rosary **ADVENT CONCLUDES &**

CHRISTMAS BEGINS

Please view Advent/Christmas schedule on page 3.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 25

FRONT DESK/OFFICE CLOSED

CHRISTMAS DAY

Please view Christmas schedule on page 3.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 26

FRONT DESK/OFFICE CLOSED

9:00 am | GS/High School Staycation

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27

5:30 am | St. Joseph Men's Group 8:15 am | ENDOW

9:00 am | GS/High School Staycation

6:00 pm | Stephen Ministry Training

7:30 pm | School of Community for

University Students (CLU)*

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 28

8:15 am | ENDOW

9:00 am | GS/High School Staycation 12:00 pm | Eucharistic Adoration begins

in the church

6:00 pm | Stephen Ministry

6:00 pm | Music Ministry Rehearsal

6:00 pm | Sacrament Preparation with

Deacon Huan

7:30 pm | School of Community (CL)*

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 29

7:30 am | Men of Emmaus

9:00 am | ENDOW

9:00 am | GS/High School Staycation

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30

8:00 am | Marian Movement

of Priests Cenacle

8:15 am | School of Community (CL)*

8:50 am | Pro Life Rosary

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 31

11:00 am | Parishioners' Rosary

MONDAY, JANUARY 1, 2024 SOLEMNITY OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY, THE MOTHER OF GOD

It is not a Holy Day of Obligation since the Solemnity falls on a Monday.

FRONT DESK/OFFICE CLOSED

*(CL) Communion & Liberation

For programs, events, and faith formation at Nativity, please visit:

www.nool.us

DAILY READINGS

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 23

Reading 1: Mal 3:1-4, 23-24 Psalm: 25:4-5ab, 8-9, 10 and 14 Gospel: Lk 1:57-66

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 24

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Reading 1: 2 Sm 7:1-5, 8b-12, 14a, 16 Psalm: 89:2-3, 4-5, 27, 29 Reading 2: Rom 16:25-27 Gospel: Lk 1:26-38

The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) Vigil Mass; 4 pm, 6 pm, 8 pm

Reading 1: Is 62:1-5 Psalm: 89:4-5, 16-17, 27, 29. Reading 2: Acts 13:16-17, 22-25 Gospel: Mt 1:1-25

The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) Mass During the Night; 10 pm

Reading 1: Is 9:1-6 Psalm: 96: 1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13. Reading 2: Ti 2:11-14 Gospel: Lk 2:1-14

MONDAY, DECEMBER 25

The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) Mass at Dawn; 7:30 am Reading 1: Is 62:11-12 Psalm: 97:1, 6, 11-12. Reading 2: Ti 3:4-7 Gospel: Lk 2:15-20

The Nativity of the Lord (Christmas) Mass During the Day; 9:30 am, 11:30 am Reading 1: Is 52:7-10

Reading 1: Is 52:7-10 Psalm: 98:1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6. Reading 2: Heb 1:1-6 Gospel: Jn 1:1-18

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 26

Feast of Saint Stephen, First Martyr Reading 1: Acts 6:8-10; 7:54-59 Psalm: 31:3cd-4, 6 and 8ab, 16bc and 17 Gospel: Mt 10:17-22

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27

Feast of Saint John, Apostle and Evangelist Reading 1: 1 In 1:1-4

Reading 1: 1 Jn 1:1-4 Psalm: 97:1-2, 5-6, 11-12 Gospel: Jn 20:1a and 2-8

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 28

Feast of the Holy Innocents, Martyrs Reading 1: 1 Jn 1:5–2:2 Psalm: 124:2-3, 4-5, 7cd-8 Gospel: Mt 2:13-18

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 29

The Fifth Day in the Octave of Christmas

Reading 1: 1 Jn 2:3-11 Psalm: 96:1-2a, 2b-3, 5b-6 Gospel: Lk 2:22-35

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 30

The Sixth Day in the Octave of Christmas

Reading 1: 1 Jn 2:12-17 Psalm: 96:7-8a, 8b-9, 10 Gospel: Lk 2:36-40

PRAY THE ROSARY WITH US

SATURDAY

8:50 am | Pro-Life Rosary **SUNDAY**

11:00 am | Parishioners' Rosary

Faith. The certainty that everything is God's, that God is the Father of everyone, that the world is destined to everlasting positivity. If [Mary] had not had this in her mind every day, if she had not gotten up every morning thinking about this, if she had not moved through her day thinking about this, if she had not gone to bed at night thinking about this, it would have been an abstract theory, it would have been just thoughts.

- Servant of God, Fr. Luigi Giussani

CHRISTMAS GIVING

At Christmas, many people give an additional gift to the parish. To do so use the QR code or link here or the envelope in the pew. Thank you for your generosity.

ppay.co/lMlvNF9HF0k



NATIVITY MEN'S LENTEN RETREAT MARCH 15-17, 2024 FRIDAY—SUNDAY YMCA OF THE ROCKIES ESTES PARK

QUESTIONS? Contact: Bob Patton at 720-883-1893 or catholicmensgroup@nool.us

More details and registration information are coming soon.

GIVING TREE: RECYCLE CHRISTMAS CARDS

Thank you, Nativity parishioners, for your generous support of those who need help this Christmas. Nativity Giving Tree uses the front of Christmas cards for the tags we put up every year. Please bring your used Christmas card front covers to the front desk to be used for next year's giving. Thank you!



SAVE THE DATE: MISSA DE ANGELIS WORKSHOP SATURDAY JANUARY 20, 2024 AFTER THE 9:30 AM MASS

Enjoy coffee and light refreshments as Fr. Emanuele and Frederick Proulx explore the Missa de Angelis:

- Where did it come from?
- Why are we learning it?
- When will we sing it at Nativity?

Stay tuned for an attendance sign-up!

EMAIL SCAM !ALERT!

Dear Parishioners, beware of email scammers taking advantage of the holiday season by trying to impersonate parish staff. Our priests will never ask you to buy gift cards for any reason. If you have received such messages, please mark them as spam and delete them.

The scam email messages can show our pastor's name as a sender; however, if you pay close attention to the sender's email address, you will see that it does not match Father Emanuele's email address associated with our parish.

If you have any questions, please email our IT specialist, **Jim DuBey** at *j.dubey@nool.us*.

A SIMPLE WAY TO SUPPORT NATIVITY: FAITH & REASON LONGMONT MILK CAPS COLLECTION

The parish and school collect Longmont dairy milk caps as a fundraiser for the school. We get five cents for each milk cap. Please bring them to the school or parish office. Thank you!



The Greatest **Gift God** Gives Us Is **His Son**

STEWARDSHIP SPOTLIGHT

In Advent, we are encouraged to live in anticipation of the

coming of Jesus. Jesus tells us, "Be Watchful! Be Alert!" (Mk 13:33). As the season continues, Isaiah is quoted, "Prepare the way of the Lord" (Mk 1:3), and John the Baptist tells us, "There is one among you whom you do not recognize, the one coming after me" (Jn 1:26). All of these are telling us to pay attention.

When we live a life of stewardship, a life of charity, or evangelical poverty, we are aware of what God is doing in our lives. If we think God is not working in our lives, we are not paying attention. "Be Watchful! Be Alert!"

The greatest gift God gives us is his Son. This year of Eucharistic Revival, it is evident that for many, the "one among us we do not recognize" is Jesus, who is fully present with us in the Eucharist. This gift freely given—a gift we can never be worthy of-is Mass.

This Christmas, let us truly contemplate the greatest gift, Jesus, and have the awareness of all the gifts God has given us. Then, let us decide to be thankful and return that gift and make a commitment to continue giving. This coming year, let us pay attention to what God is doing in our lives and see the many blessings He bestows upon us each day, for as we are reminded on the 4th Sunday of Advent, "Nothing will be impossible for God" (Lk 1:37).

LIVING STEWARDSHIP AT NATIVITY

Stewardship is about conversion which leads to a deeper relationship with God. It is our way of saying "yes" to the reality that Jesus offers us. At Nativity, we have three pillars of Stewardship: Prayer and Faith, Time and Talent, and Treasure.

Listed below, you will find the many different opportunities Nativity provides for you to share your time, talent, and faith with others. If you are inclined to say "yes" and get involved, go to the Ministries' web page to find all the resources you need.

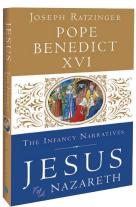
www.nool.us/ministries

NATIVITY OF OUR LORD MINISTRIES

- Altar Serving
- Readers / Lectors
- Greeters
- Ushers
- Eucharistic Ministers: Liturgical
- Eucharistic Ministers: Homebound, Hospitals, Living Facilities
- Music Ministry
- Children's Choir

- Church Cleaning
- Votive Candles
- Sanctuary Flowers
- Sacristy Laundry
- Collection Counters
- **Donut Sunday Volunteers**
- Funeral Reception Help
- Parish Meal Train
- Special Events and Hospitality
- Faith Formation Teachers
- Totus Tuus High School Volunteers Formation: Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS)
- Formation: Faith Formation Classes
- Formation: Venturers of the Star
- Formation: GS High School Youth
- Formation: Totus Tuus
- Sacramental Preparation: Baptism
- Sacramental Preparation: Restored Order Sacraments
- Sacramental Preparation: RCIA
- Sacramental Preparation: RCIC
- Sacramental Preparation: Marriage
- Catholic Young Adult Group
- Families of John Paul II
- Bible Study
- **ENDOW**
- Christian Unity
- FIAT (Friends in all times)
- Men of Emmaus
- Men's Retreat
- Natural Family Planning (NFP)
- Communion and Liberation (CL)
- CLU (Communion and Liberation University Students)
- **Eucharistic Adoration**
- Funeral Notifications
- Sunday Rosary at 11:00 AM
- Spanish Prayer Group
- Prayer in the Square
- Prayer Line
- Rosary for Life
- Respect Life
- Liturgy of the Hours
- New Springtime Charismatic Gathering
- St. Joseph's Men's Group
- Women's Guild
- Knights of Columbus
- North Metro Catholic Singles
- Baptismal Bib Committee
- Craft Fair
- Rosary Making
- St. Vincent de Paul Society
- Stephen Ministry
- Hope Corner
- Nativity Days
- Nativity Nights
- Giving Tree (Christmas)
- Nativity Widows
- Nativity: Faith & Reason Volunteers
- Mission IS Possible
- Mission Uganda
- Men's Basketball
- Men's Softball
- American Heritage Girls (AHG)
- **Boy Scouts**
- Homeschool Community

POPE BENEDICT XVI JESUS OF NAZARETH: THE INFANCY NARRATIVES



Fr. John shares some fundamental themes that caught his attention while reading the book.

"Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. Let it be done to me according to your word" (Luke 1:38).

Reflecting on Mary's response to the angel, Benedict XVI returns to a medieval Advent homily by Bernard of Clairvaux to reveal what he refers to as the drama of Mary's "yes" to the Lord. After the error of our first parents, the whole world was shrouded in darkness, under the dominion of death. Now God seeks to enter the world anew. He knocks at Mary's door. He needs human freedom. The only way he can redeem man, who was created free, is by means of a free "yes" to his will. In creating freedom, he made himself

in a certain sense dependent on man. His power is tied to the unenforceable "yes" of a human being. In his homily, St. Bernard portrays heaven and earth as it were holding its breath at the question to Mary. Will she say yes? She hesitates... will her humility hold her back? Just this once—Bernard tells her—do not be humble but be daring! Give us your "yes"! The late pontiff describes this moment as if the whole celestial court of angels were present, sitting on the edge of their seats (or wings!) waiting eagerly for Mary's response. I often think of this page while visiting the sick in the hospital and proposing to those who have been away from the sacraments for decades to return by going to Confession. I imagine having the saints and angels being present with me who are eagerly waiting the response, and the great joy and celebration, when they agree to receive the sacrament.

"Mary will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). Benedict XVI also reminds the reader to not lose sight of the fundamental reason for the mystery of Christmas. God became man to save us from our sins. At the time of Jesus' birth, the prevailing expectations of salvation were primarily focused upon Israel's concrete suffering, which pointed to the reestablishment of the Davidic kingdom and of Israel's freedom. For many people at that time, and in our time as well, the promise of the forgiveness of sins and restored communion and friendship with the Father seem too little or too abstract. In the celebration of Christmas, we do not expect Christ to meet our deepest existential needs and to be embraced with the gaze of mercy. Yet he came precisely for this, to forgive our sins and restore us to communion with ourselves, with others, and with God.



THE GOSPEL OF MARK: FAITH NOT FEAR

BEGINNING **JANUARY 10/11, 2024**

Study guides are \$9 each, payable upon registration.

The Gospel of Mark is the shortest of the four gospels, it is fast-moving, and action-packed. In the Gospel of Mark, we see Saint Peter's account of Christ's life and teaching because Saint Mark was the companion of Saint Peter. Because Mark's Gospel is read in the liturgy in 2024, this program will give you insights into the Sunday Gospel readings. Join us in this 14-part series led by Dr. Tim Gray on FORMED. The program includes weekly video presentation followed by small group discussion. We will finish this study the last week of April, 2024. You can sign up for one of the sessions below.

Wednesday Session, 1:00-2:30 pm facilitated by Debbie Jones and Theresa Cooley OR

Thursday Session, 6:30–8:00 pm facilitated by Steve Moser

Register at

www.nool.us/upcoming-events

FROM ST. VINCENT DE PAUL SOCIETY

We wish our family, friends, and guests at Nativity parish all the beauty of Christmas. We rejoice in the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. From the National Council of the United States Society of St. Vincent de Paul (www. svdpusa.org), we gladly share:

A Christmas Prayer

Beneath the light of a star, In a manger filled with hay, Behold the Lord of the Universe!

You come to us not leading an army, But humble and small; You come to us not wielding power, But helpless and cold; You come to us not wealthy and famous, But poor and obscure.

Help us, Lord Jesus, to see You
On this, and every day
In the street and in our neighborhoods,
In the hungry and the poor,
In the lonely and deprived,
In the infants and the elderly,
And in each other.

Like the shepherds led by the star, May we seek You daily, And serve You fully, For love alone.

Amen

For more information on our local Nativity of Our Lord St. Vincent de Paul chapter, and our mission to help the poor, see our FLOCKNOTE site at nool.flocknote.com/svdpvol.

ACCESS CATHOLIC PROGRAMMING DURING THE HOLIDAYS

Register for free at **nool.formed.org**

to access faithful Catholic content: award-winning studies, lectures, documentaries, audiobooks, movies, and family-friendly kids' programming.





Lo, in the silent night A child to God is born And all is brought again That ere was lost or lorn.

Could but thy soul, O man, Become a silent night!
God would be born in thee
And set all things aright.

Recently, during my morning prayer, I discovered this beautiful 17th century poem by the Polish monk Silesius (1624-1677). I was deeply moved by its ability to both announce the Good News of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem and to invite the reader to enter personally into this great mystery. It speaks of many of the important teachings of the Advent and Christmas seasons. I would like to share some reflections on the dynamic nature of the poem as a guide for our Advent journey.

The poem begins with the word "Lo," which is traditionally used in Old English to draw attention to an amazing or interesting event. It is an echo of the invitation the shepherds received by the message of an angel to go and look at what miraculously took place in Bethlehem. "Let us go, then, to Bethlehem to see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us" (Luke 2:15). When I first read the poem, I was moved by the invitation to stop and look. We are invited during this Advent season to take time to stop, to retreat from our everyday cares and concerns, and look upon the amazing destination of our Advent pilgrimage—the birth of the Christ child in Bethlehem. The comma that immediately follows reinforces the invitation to stop. We

would normally try to run ahead, but we are asked to go slowly and to open our eyes and our hearts to this great mystery.

"In the silent night." The poet then asks us to look deeply into the silence of the night, to look up into the starry night. He almost anticipates for us that there will be a fact that will irrupt into the dark night, a bright star that will surely guide us to Bethlehem if we but follow. "And lo, the star which they had seen in the East went before them, till it came to rest

over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they rejoiced exceedingly with great joy" (Mt 2:9-10).

The second line of the poem contains these mysterious words: "A child to God is born." From the silence of the night, this prophecy from the Book of Wisdom is fulfilled: "While gentle silence enveloped all things, and night in its swift course was now half gone, your all-powerful word leaped from heaven, from the royal throne, into the midst of the land that was doomed" (Wisdom 18:14-15). Jesus, the Word of God (Jn 1), leaped from heaven, so to say, and entered the world through the mystery of the Annunciation of the archangel Gabriel and Mother Mary's generous availability to welcome the Christ child. Contrasting with the busyness all around us in the month of December, the mystery of the birth of Christ is, above all, one of silence and humility.

"And all is brought again." This Christ child will touch all of creation, all of Being, everything that ever existed. Through Him everything will be brought again into communion and familiarity with the Father. St. Paul spoke of this in his letter to the Ephesians: "He has made known to us the mystery of his will, [...] a plan for the fullness of time, to recapitulate all things in Christ, in heaven and on earth" (1, 9-10). This first stanza remarkably describes the mystery of the first Advent and Christmas, with an emphasis on God's mission to restore all things in Christ, which he will continue to develop in the next stanza.

"Could but thy soul, O man." The second stanza begins with the poet's invitation to each of us personally today. It is the invitation that the Church makes to us as we begin our Advent journey. It is an invitation to take seriously our heart and to live Advent at the level of our hearts. "Thy" highlights the importance of this personal "I." It is not some generic

humanity but *my humanity* that Jesus comes to save. The Advent season should be a personal provocation to each of us.

The poet uses the conditional tense "could" and "would," which reminds me that God respects our freedom. The freedom of the "I" is the hinge where the full extent of the mystery will be played out. Baby Jesus will not force himself into our hearts; he awaits to be welcomed!

"Become a silent night!" This is the summary of the Church's Advent invitation to each of us: to become a silent night. "Could but thy soul become a silent night!" We have the repetition of the words "silent night" again in both stanzas. The goal of Advent is to make space in our hearts for the arrival of the Christ child, to convert our hearts from all the distractions and disordered attachments to make a home for Jesus. The poet seems to be inviting us to have what the Church calls "poverty of spirit," the position of our heart that waits to be filled by the light of Christ.

The poet then invites us to look to the Virgin Mary to learn this correct position of heart. "God would be born in thee." Like Mary, the poet reminds us that the purpose of Advent is that the Christ child be born in our hearts and can be born in the concrete circumstances of our lives. As I mentioned before, the conditional verb tense "would" points to the fact that it is not mechanical or automatic but the movement and decision of our freedom aided by grace.

"And set all things aright." Everything finds its proper place, its rightful place, in the encounter with Christ. In Christ, everything is "set aright." My heart desires this order that Christ gives. When I read this, I imagined the experience of peace and unity after confession, of having everything that holds me captive liberated, of having all these chains of sin broken.

I hope that you, too, can receive the personal invitation of this poet to welcome the mystery of Advent and Christmas in our lives. Our Lord Jesus Christ is making his Advent journey towards us and desires to meet us in the silence of our hearts. As we continue our Advent journey, let us renew our desire for the Christ child to be born in our lives by placing ourselves at the school of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Fr. John Roderick, FSCB

Image Credit: *NASA*. The Sun's rays begin to illuminate the Earth's atmosphere as the International Space Station flew into an orbital sunrise 261 miles above Texas, as seen in this image taken by astronaut Bob Hines.



Mrs. Hulquest's Kindergarten class wear Juan Diego Tilmas for the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.



Dear Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas,

Take these children as your own, sweetly draw them to your heart, obtain for them the grace of keeping

build your shrine in their hearts, enfold them in the mantle of your care, until the day when in a new land, all your children join with you, their merciful mother, endlessly giving praise and thanks to God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen



KEEP CHRIST IN CHRISTMAS POSTER CONTEST

The Nativity Knights of Columbus Council 10961 is pleased to announce the results of the 2023 Keep Christ in Christmas Poster Contest. Congratulations to these students! Their artworks will now move on to the Knights of Columbus District competition. Special thanks to the Nativity: Faith and Reason School art teacher, Jane Proulx, and the Principal, Sebastian Calvino, for their help with administering the contest.

The Nativity Knights of Columbus Council 10961 would like to thank all of the students who submitted their beautiful artwork for the contest and wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

2023 WINNERS

Ages 11 – 14

1st Place Genevieve Bergier 2nd Place Cecvlia Wiktor 3rd Place Talitha Mitchell

Ages 8-10

1st Place Aleena Logan 2nd Place Vivian Barloco 3rd Place Lucy Boyer

Ages 5-7

1st Place Maggie O'Connor 2nd Place Emma Roberts Rose Preble 3rd Place



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— St. John Paul II, Fides et ratio

PARISH BOOKSTORE HOURS: MONDAY-FRIDAY | 8 AM-8 PM SATURDAY | 9 AM-2 PM

Recommended Advent readings:

- Benedict XVI, Jesus of Nazareth. The Infancy Narratives (Ignatius Press, 2012)
- Benedict XVI, *The Blessings of Christmas* (Ignatius Press, 2007)
- José Granados, The Fifth Candle of Advent (Disciples Books, 2012)
- Jean Daniélou, The Infancy Narratives (Cluny, 2022)
- John Henry Newman, Waiting for Christ (Augustine Institute, 2018)







SCAN TO JOIN NATIVITY

Nativity is under the pastoral care of the Priestly Fraternity of St. Charles Borromeo, a religious order, founded in 1985 by Msgr. Massimo Camisasca in Italy. The order has its origins in the charism of Fr. Luigi Giussani, founder of the Catholic lay movement Communion and Liberation (CL). Here is how the Priestly Fraternity of St. Charles Borromeo is described by the founder, Msgr. Massimo Camisasca:

Fraternity: "The Fraternity is a companionship made up of people that are placed together by an Other. [...] Each of us [...] is continually accompanied by Christ through his brothers."

Priestly: "The priestly vocation [...] is a continuous communion with God and man. [...] It acts as a bridge between heaven and earth, represents a fundamental link in the history of salvation, and also serves as an important figure in the journey towards unity among men."

Missionary: "Mission [...] consists simply in entering within the same mission for which God sent His own Son into the world, for which the Son sent the Apostles, and for which, in turn, the Apostles sent other brothers, until the visible echo of that event touched even us."

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