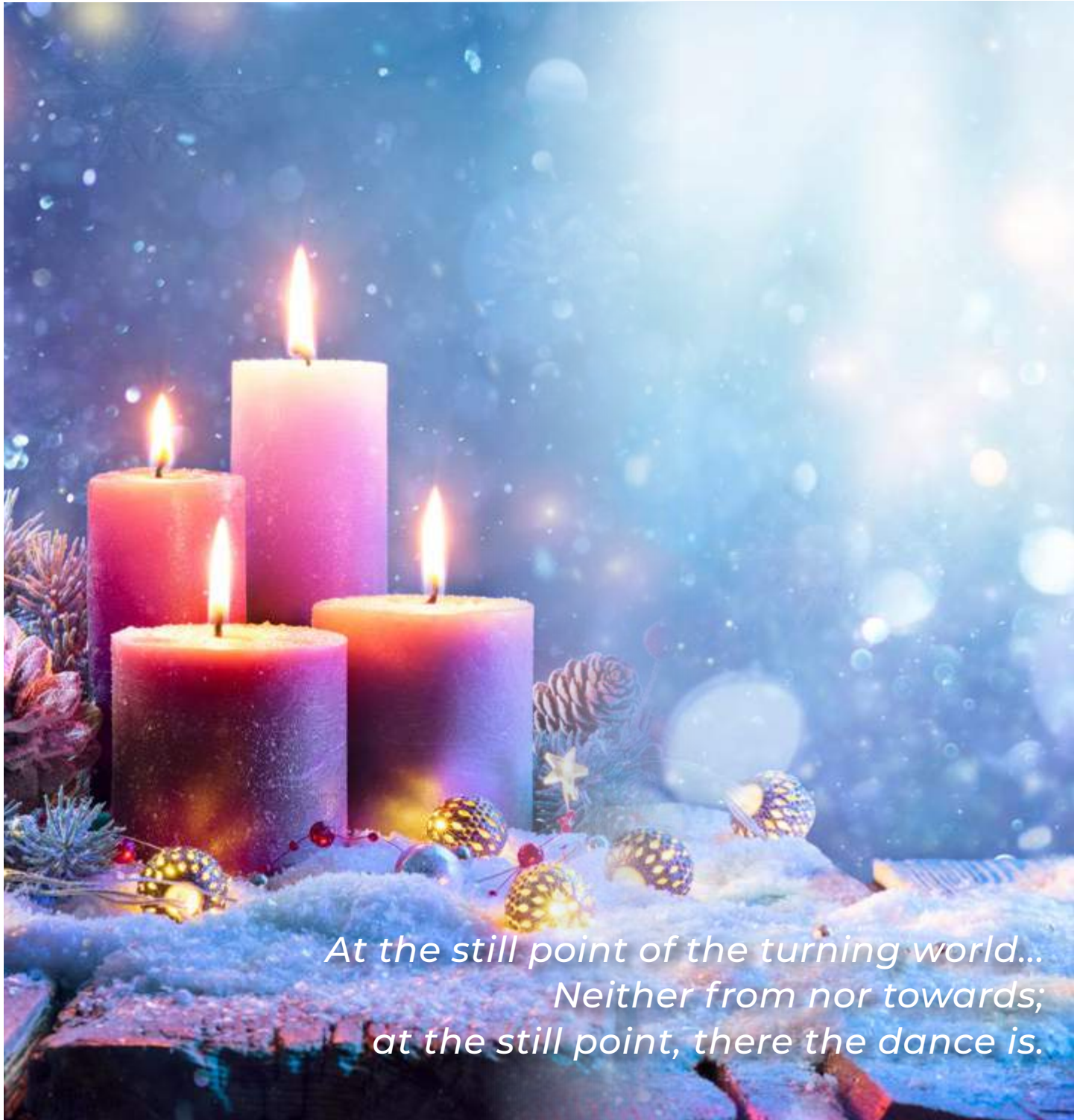


STILL POINT

A PUBLICATION OF TAU CENTER

A spirituality ministry of the Wheaton Franciscans

SPECIAL ISSUE – DECEMBER 2021



*At the still point of the turning world...
Neither from nor towards;
at the still point, there the dance is.*

ADVENT SEASON | CHRISTMAS SEASON

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|---------------------------------|----|
| 1. FROM SR. GLENNA CZACHOR, OSF | 4 |
| 2. PERSONAL WEEKLY REFLECTIONS | 6 |
| 3. SEASON OF ADVENT | 16 |
| 4. POETRY OF ADVENT | 18 |
| 5. CENTERING PRAYER | 22 |
| 6. 12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS | 26 |
| 7. PROGRAMS AND OFFERINGS | 40 |

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STAFF CONTRIBUTORS
SHARON DEVO & TAMMY WINN
EDITOR: SHARON DEVO
DESIGN & LAYOUT BY CHRISTINE CIANCIOSI
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A new time is upon us.
A great hope is before us.
The Light has embraced us.

ADVENT: SAVORING THE DELIGHTS OF THE SEASON

Advent marks the beginning of the liturgical year. It is the *Church's new year* and is the time that prepares us for Christmas and the year ahead. Advent is full of mystical themes, rich with meaning and depth.

The word *Advent* comes from the Latin – *Adventus* – meaning “coming”. Advent is often seen as a three-fold preparation:

- We prepare for celebrating the coming of Christ as a human baby – the Nativity.
- We prepare for celebrating the coming and presence of the Spirit of God every day.
- We prepare for the final coming of Christ – in the world, or with us at the end of our life.

Yet, we live in a culture that is so quick to ignore this preparation, and move into the celebrations of Christmas. It's mid-September and already stores are filled with Christmas decorations. Hallmark channel begins running Christmas movies in October and Christmas music starts playing on the radio the day after Halloween!

As Christians – particularly Catholics – the culture doesn't support us as we try to savor the delights of Advent. So...we need to take the time and make the efforts ourselves.

Let us truly take the time this Advent to prepare our hearts and our spirits for the coming of God in a more mindful and conscious manner.

One way to savor the season is to engage in all your senses. Engaging our senses is another way of being mindful, being fully present in the moment, by paying attention to your body at this place – in this space – at this time.

Try it! Throughout the season of Advent, stop and take a moment to fully experience with your whole body:

See with fresh eyes your traditions and family holiday heirlooms.

Listen with wonder to the carols and bells and the sounds of the season;

Savor with enthusiasm the cookies and all the other goodies that come from the kitchen;

Inhale deeply the scents of pine, and cinnamon and fires in the hearth;

Embrace the chill in the winter air and the coziness of your favorite blanket and flannel pj's.

Savor the season! Be childlike – embrace a sense of awe and wonder – be present and aware. Don't let the commercialism drown out the true meaning of Christmas. Be like Linus at the end of Charlie Brown Christmas – live your life in a way that reminds people of the true meaning of Christmas – love, and family – and peace and harmony and goodness and joy.

Sr. Glenna M. Czachor, OSF

PERSONAL WEEKLY REFLECTIONS

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT: KEEP YOUR HEART AWAKE

Sunday, November 28, 2021

In this first week of Advent, Sunday's Gospel describes Jesus telling his disciples to pay attention to the signs all around them in order to be ready for the return of Christ. If we look at this reading, not with a lens of desperation but one of inspiration, we can see the life-giving message being declared. "Your redemption is at hand," Jesus says, speaking to those living lives centered on Love — his disciples. Jesus goes on to encourage them to keep their hearts awake by not succumbing to "the anxieties of daily life," which pull one way from what matters most. There is an invitation here to practice being in the present moment.

Reflection Question:

How can I awaken or keep my heart awake this Advent?

The readings for the First Sunday of Advent can be found on the USCCB website:

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/112821.cfm>



"How can I awaken my heart
this Advent?"

LK 21:25-28, 34-36

Jesus said to his disciples:

"There will be signs in the sun,
the moon, and the stars,
and on earth nations will be in
dismay,
perplexed by the roaring of
the sea and the waves.
People will die of fright
in anticipation of what is
coming upon the world,
for the powers of the heavens
will be shaken.

And then they will see the
Son of Man
coming in a cloud with power
and great glory.
But when these signs begin
to happen,
stand erect and raise your
heads
because your redemption is
at hand.
"Beware that your hearts do
not become drowsy
from carousing and
drunkenness

and the anxieties of daily life,
and that day catch you by
surprise like a trap.
For that day will assault
everyone
who lives on the face of the
earth.
Be vigilant at all times
and pray that you have the
strength
to escape the tribulations that
are imminent
and to stand before the Son of
Man."

ADVENT

SECOND WEEK OF ADVENT: GOD COMES TO US

Sunday, December 5, 2021

In the Sunday Gospel of the second week of Advent, we learn about John the Baptist preaching. It says “the word of God came to John.” How wonderful it is to know that God is a seeker too, perhaps looking for the open hearts in which to communicate to the world. I imagine as John receives God’s word he cannot contain it. He is compelled to do something with this Love and, as the reading says, then John “went throughout the whole region of the Jordan, proclaiming...” a message of repentance, forgiveness, and justice.

Reflection Question:

When God comes to me, what do I do next?

The readings for the Second Sunday of Advent can be found on the USCCB website:

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/120521.cfm>

LK 3:1-6

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of the region of Iturea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias was tetrarch of Abilene, during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John the son of Zechariah in the desert. John went throughout the whole region of the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah:

A voice of one crying out in the desert:

*“Prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight his paths.*

*Every valley shall be filled
and every mountain and hill
shall be made low.*

*The winding roads shall be
made straight,*

*and the rough ways made
smooth,*

*and all flesh shall see the
salvation of God.”*

THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT: WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

Sunday, December 12, 2021

The Gospel reading for the third Sunday of Advent opens with crowds asking John the Baptist “What should we do?” They must have had a longing for something more to even ask this, an anticipation of a better way of being. John doesn’t tell them to do anything outlandish. In fact, the message is quite simple and direct — share your resources with those who have none, be honest in your dealings, and be content with what you have. What John describes may seem like an obvious way to improve our collective life experience, but it is not always easy. To hear him articulate how a just world would be, to stand up and name what needed changing, made the people wonder if he could be the Christ. Surely he was conveying a message of Love.

Reflection Question: In what ways can I newly approach doing what is most loving albeit difficult?

The readings for the Third Sunday of Advent can be found on the USCCB website:

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/121221.cfm>

LK 3:10-18

The crowds asked John the Baptist, “What should we do?” He said to them in reply, “Whoever has two cloaks should share with the person who has none.

And whoever has food should do likewise.”

Even tax collectors came to be baptized and they said to him, “Teacher, what should we do?”

He answered them, “Stop collecting more than what is prescribed.”

Soldiers also asked him, “And what is it that we should do?”

He told them, “Do not practice extortion, do not falsely accuse anyone, and be satisfied with your wages.”

Now the people were filled with expectation, and all were asking in their hearts whether John might be the Christ.

John answered them all, saying, “I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is coming. I am not worthy to loosen the thongs of his sandals.

He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

His winnowing fan is in his hand to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

Exhorting them in many other ways, he preached good news to the people.

**FOURTH WEEK OF ADVENT:
COOPERATE WITH GRACE**

Sunday, December 19, 2021

For the fourth Sunday in Advent we read the Gospel story of how Mary travels to see her cousin Elizabeth, who is also pregnant. What I appreciate about their interaction is the joy it expresses as they find themselves cooperating with grace. They both are preparing to bring forth new life, with no way of fully knowing the impact each child will make on the other or the world. Through these two women, our sisters in the communion of saints, love begets love and God blesses the world.

Reflection Question:

Where in my life can I trust,
with joy, that I am somehow
cooperating with grace?

The readings for the Fourth Sunday of Advent can be found on the USCCB website:

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/121921.cfm>

LK 1:39-45

Mary set out
and traveled to the hill country in
haste
to a town of Judah,
where she entered the house of
Zechariah
and greeted Elizabeth.

When Elizabeth heard Mary's
greeting,
the infant leaped in her womb,
and Elizabeth, filled with the Holy
Spirit,
cried out in a loud voice and said,
"Blessed are you among women,
and blessed is the fruit of your
womb.

And how does this happen to me,
that the mother of my Lord
should come to me?

For at the moment the sound of
your greeting reached my ears,
the infant in my womb leaped for
joy.

Blessed are you who believed
that what was spoken to you by
the Lord
would be fulfilled."



"Where in my life can I trust, with joy, that I am
somehow cooperating with grace?"

CHRISTMAS DAY

GREAT JOY FOR ALL PEOPLE!

Saturday, December 25, 2021

The night Gospel for the Nativity fo the Lord describes the evening Jesus was born. Images of the Holy Family come to mind — Joseph protecting Mary, Mary directing her energy inward for labor, and a beautiful baby boy emerging into the outside world, Jesus! Here the three of them are, in a poor setting with an animal feeding trough for a crib. And the first visitors were lowly, unclean shepherds. They were guided to this glorious event by the angel of the Lord who said “Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.” And so it is — Emmanuel — God is with us, all of us. Merry Christmas!

Reflection Question: How can I allow God’s presence to assure me that I need not be afraid, so that I can embrace the joy before me?

The readings for the Fourth Sunday of Advent can be found on the USCCB website:
<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/122521-night.cfm>

LK 2:1-14

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus that the whole world should be enrolled. This was the first enrollment,

when Quirinius was governor of Syria. So all went to be enrolled, each to his own town.

And Joseph too went up from Galilee from the town of Nazareth to Judea, to the city of David that is called Bethlehem, because he was of the house and family of David, to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with child. While they were there, the time came for her to have her child, and she gave birth to her firstborn son.

She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

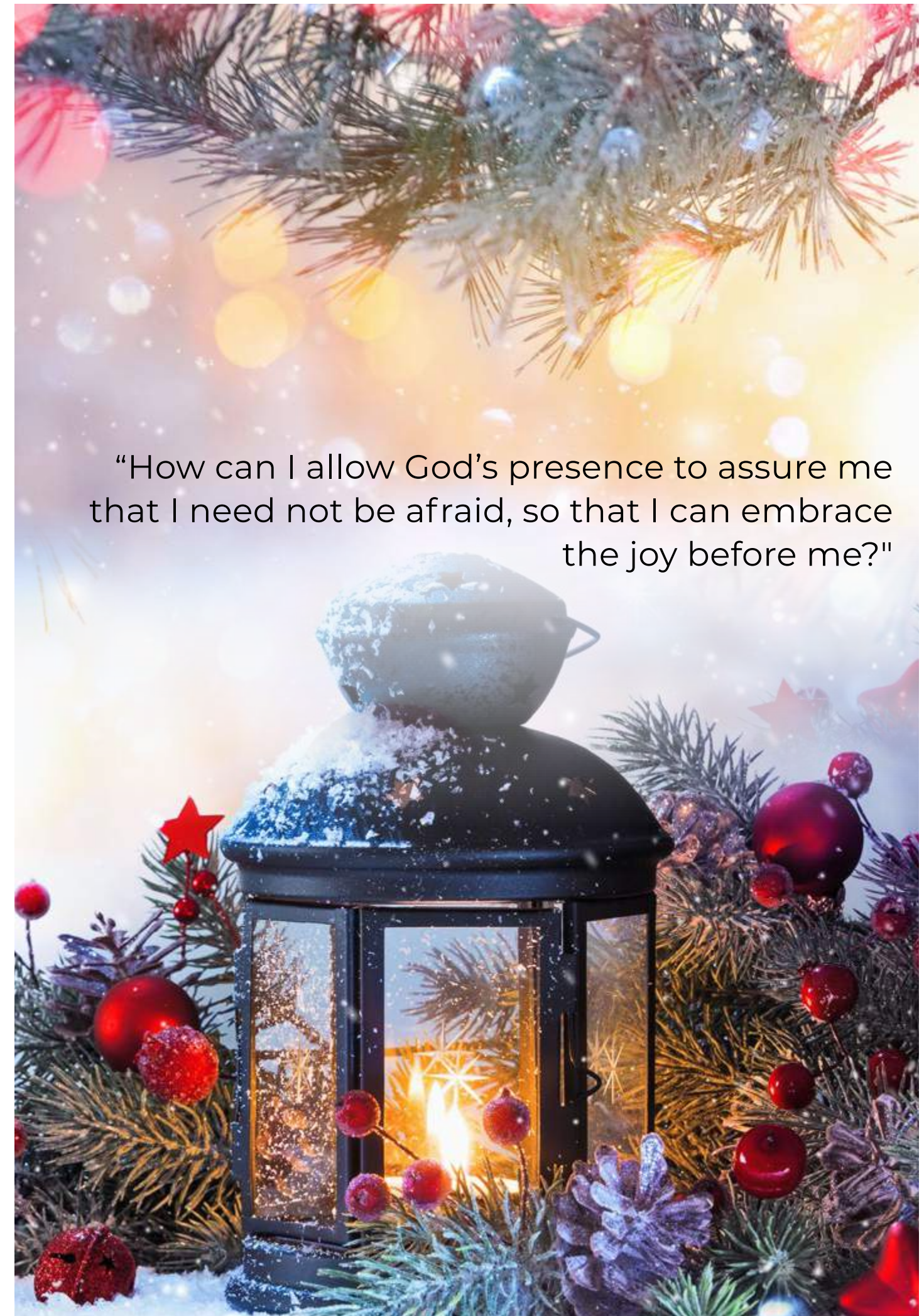
Now there were shepherds in that region living in the fields and keeping the night watch over their flock.

The angel of the Lord appeared to them and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were struck with great fear. The angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.

For today in the city of David a savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord.

And this will be a sign for you: you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.” And suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host with the angel, praising God and saying:

“Glory to God in the highest
 and on earth peace to those
 on whom his favor rests.”



“How can I allow God’s presence to assure me that I need not be afraid, so that I can embrace the joy before me?”

“Where do I need to be open to holy guidance now?”

EPIPHANY

Holy Guidance

Sunday, January 2, 2022

The magi in the Gospel for the Epiphany were a group of scholars who dealt with astrology, foretelling the future, and dream interpretation. They observed a star, trusted it was signaling a king's birth, and followed it to find Jesus. Spirit prompted and guided them to this experience. Afterward the magi were led again by the Spirit, this time through a dream, to depart another way so as to not encounter Herod. This story can remind us that the Spirit of God does indeed go before us. All we need to do is be open to the signs of Love in our midst and respond.

Reflection Question:

When have I felt led by the Spirit in the past and where do I need to be open to holy guidance now?

The readings for the Epiphany of the Lord can be found on the USCCB website:

<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/010222.cfm>

MT 2:1-12

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold, magi from the east arrived in Jerusalem, saying, “Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star at its rising and have come

to do him homage.” When King Herod heard this, he was greatly troubled, and all Jerusalem with him.

Assembling all the chief priests and the scribes of the people, He inquired of them where the Christ was to be born.

They said to him, “In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it has been written through the prophet: And you, Bethlehem, land of Judah, are by no means least among the rulers of Judah; since from you shall come a ruler, who is to shepherd my people Israel.”

Then Herod called the magi secretly and ascertained from them the time of the star's appearance.

He sent them to Bethlehem and said, “Go and search diligently for the child.

When you have found him, bring me word, that I too may go and do him homage.” After their audience with the king they set out. And behold, the star that they had seen at its rising preceded them, until it came and stopped over the place where the child was. They were overjoyed at seeing the star, and on entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother.

They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their country by another way.

SEASON OF ADVENT

A Reflection from Fr. Phil Horrigan

This season of Advent arrives, as every season before, with its historical, liturgical and contextual implications.

Once again, the great Hebrew prophets call the people of God to rejoice in the glory of God. Jeremiah assures us that the “days are coming” when God will fulfill a promise of justice; take off the robe of mourning and misery”, Baruch urges us; “be glad and exult with all your heart” Zephaniah cries out; Micah announces that all this will happen because “God will stand firm and shepherd the flock with strength”.

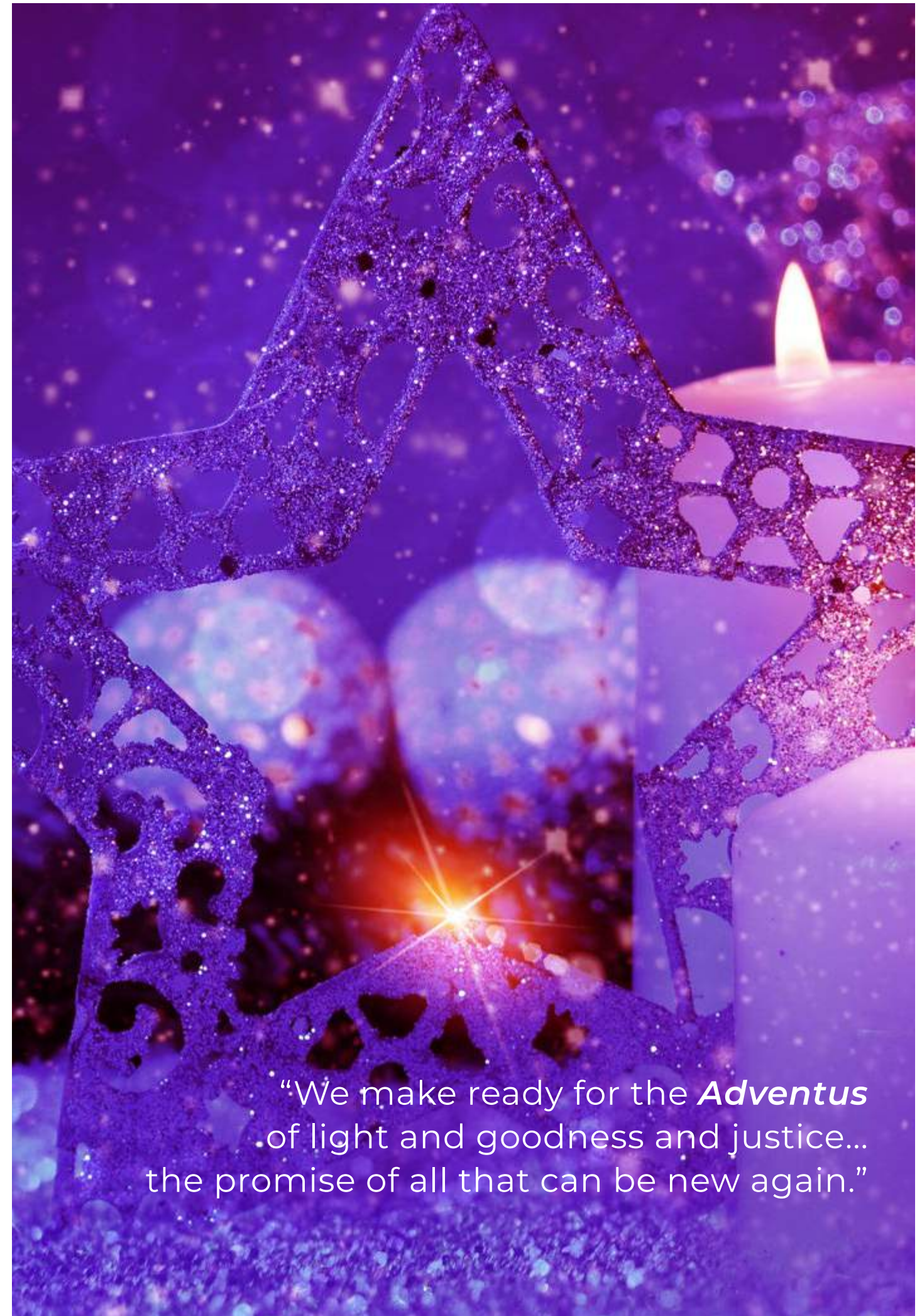
“What shall we do?” the crowds ask John the Baptist? What, indeed, shall **we** do? Paul gives us an answer: “abound in love”; “be pure and blameless”; “have no anxiety”; trusting in God whose peace “surpasses all

understanding and who will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus”.

We hear these words of the prophets and of Paul as we emerge from the throes of the Covid pandemic. We yearn to hear the enthusiasm of the prophets and the encouragement of Paul as their words reverberate in our world. We long to gather as the people of God in a spirit of joy and hospitality; we rejoice in each other and in the power of God’s presence that surrounds us and lifts us up.

We make ready for the **Adventus** of light and goodness and justice embodied in the Messiah, the Christ of the cosmos, the redeemer of all that weighs us down, the promise of all that can be new again. A new time is upon us, a great hope is before us, the Word and the Light from ancient times has embraced us. “The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy!”

Wheaton Franciscans
Our Lady of Angels Chapel
Advent & Christmas Liturgy schedule
www.wheatonfranciscan.org



“We make ready for the **Adventus** of light and goodness and justice... the promise of all that can be new again.”

POETRY OF ADVENT

Making the House Ready for the Lord

by Mary Oliver

Dear Lord, I have swept and I have washed but
 Still nothing is as shining as it should be
 For you. Under the sink, for example, is an
 Uproar of mice—it is the season of their
 Many children. What shall I do? And under the eaves
 And through the walls the squirrels
 Have gnawed their ragged entrances—but it is the season
 When they need shelter, so what shall I do? And
 The raccoon limps into the kitchen and opens the cupboard
 While the dog snores, the cat hugs the pillow;
 What shall I do? Beautiful is the new snow falling
 In the yard and the fox who is staring boldly
 Up the path, to the door. And still I believe you will
 Come, Lord; you will, when I speak to the fox,
 The sparrow, the lost dog, the shivering sea-goose, know
 That really I am speaking to you whenever I say,
 As I do all morning and afternoon: Come in, Come in
 Advent Calendar

Advent Calendar

by Rowan Williams

He will come like last leaf's fall.
 One night when the November wind
 has flayed the trees to bone, and earth
 wakes choking on the mould,
 the soft shroud's folding.
 He will come like frost.
 One morning when the shrinking earth
 opens on mist, to find itself
 arrested in the net
 of alien, sword-set beauty.
 He will come like dark.
 One evening when the bursting red
 December sun draws up the sheet
 and penny-masks its eye to yield
 the star-snowed fields of sky.
 He will come, will come,
 will come like crying in the night,
 like blood, like breaking,
 as the earth writhes to toss him free.
 He will come like child.

POETRY OF ADVENT

The Cultivation of Christmas Trees

by T.S. Eliot

There are several attitudes towards Christmas,

Some of which we may disregard:
The social, the torpid, the patently commercial,
The rowdy (the pubs being open till midnight),
And the childish – which is not that of the child
For whom the candle is a star, and the gilded angel
Spreading its wings at the summit of the tree
Is not only a decoration, but an angel.

The child wonders at the Christmas Tree:

Let him continue in the spirit of wonder
At the Feast as an event not accepted as a pretext;
So that the glittering rapture, the amazement
Of the first-remembered Christmas Tree,
So that the surprises, delight in new possessions
(Each one with its peculiar and exciting smell),
The expectation of the goose or turkey
And the expected awe on its appearance,

So that the reverence and the gaiety
May not be forgotten in later experience,
In the bored habituation, the fatigue, the tedium,
The awareness of death, the consciousness of failure,
Or in the piety of the convert
Which may be tainted with a self-conceit
Displeasing to God and disrespectful to children

(And here I remember also with gratitude
St. Lucy, her carol, and her crown of fire):

So that before the end, the eightieth Christmas

(By “eightieth” meaning whichever is last)
The accumulated memories of annual emotion
May be concentrated into a great joy

Which shall be also a great fear, as on the occasion
When fear came upon every soul:
Because the beginning shall remind us of the end
And the first coming of the second coming.

“For it is in giving that we receive.”
— Francis of Assisi

ADVENT - A CALL TO PRESENCE

Centering Prayer for the Advent Season

by *Laura Desmarais*

Look back at the beginnings of my Spiritual Journey in awe. This awe is a sense of knowing that my commitment to journey didn't come from me. Yes, I was curious. I was curious about those who had committed their life to journey – St. Francis, Mother Teresa, the Buddha, and Thomas Merton. I met others who had committed their lives to whatever this journey was. They became my angels. There seemed to be a peace, an inner knowing, a depth, such contentment with being who they were. They were so vulnerable!

This was not me. I felt like a lost soul. I felt like I was on a fast

moving treadmill. I wanted to know what they knew. Now I know how afraid I was to become vulnerable and to open my heart. I started to attend daily mass and sat in space that felt sacred to me. There was this sense of peace that was truly medicine for my soul. Ten years later, I am still curious. I practice ways to rest within the mystery of Sacred Presence.

During Advent we prepare to celebrate a great mystery: **God's very Presence was born within our midst.** I sense this Presence. It is this Presence that has led me on my journey. I have been led to sense the silence of my heart, let go and become vulnerable, and to live in heart fullness. As Thomas Merton said 'It is through the silence of our hearts that God discovers himself in us'.

TO REGISTER FOR
ADVENT CENTERING PRAYER
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“Silence is Gods first language;
everything else is a poor translation.
In order to hear that language,
we must learn to be still and rest in God.”

– *Fr. Thomas Keating*





“Christmas is joy,
an inner joy of light and peace.”
– *Pope Francis*

12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS

Christmas is a season, not a single day, so we invite you to take time in the coming days to reflect and explore what qualities you may like to bring into the New Year.

Allow time each morning to begin your day with reflection – even if only a minute or two. Create a space in your day to explore each prompt. What comes to mind, what emotions flow. Is there another word or phrase that comes to mind you should give attention to? Follow where your spirit leads.

Perhaps create a journal to hold all that emerges; a page for each day. Write, doodle or use collage to capture your thoughts and musings. Be gentle. Be curious. Be bold.

Together, we celebrate all that has been and all that is to arrive. Blessings in 2022.

REJOICE

First day of Christmas – December 25

If the sight of the blue skies fills you with joy, if a blade of grass springing up in the fields has power to move you, if the simple things of nature have a message that you understand, rejoice, for your soul is alive.

– Eleanora Duse

As you celebrate this Christmas Day, pause to step outside or gaze out the window, rejoice in this moment, in the beauty of the natural world. While gathered with family or friends, pause and gaze at each face. Rejoice in all the bounty and love surrounding you.

“If the simple things of nature have a message that you understand,
REJOICE,
for your soul is alive.”

GIVE

Second day of Christmas – December 26

No one has ever become poor by giving.

– Anne Frank

How do you express a generous spirit in day-to-day life? How open are you to receiving the generosity of others? The two go hand in hand – we cannot give if our own well is dry. Observe the interplay of ‘giving and receiving’ as you go about your routine. How might you bring both into balance in your life?



“Everybody can **SERVE**...
you only need a heart full of grace.
A soul generated by love.”

**Third day of Christmas –
December 27**

Everybody can serve... you only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.

– Martin Luther King, Jr.

There are many ways to serve, but first we must be open to our life being interrupted. Small mercies can be as impactful as grand gestures. Where in your day can you be more attentive to the needs of those around you? Is it a listening ear for a friend, taking time to answer a question thoughtfully, or simply a kind word? Looking ahead to 2022 could you volunteer? Where might that be?

SERVE

**Fourth day of Christmas –
December 28**

We do not remember days, we remember moments.

– unknown

As the year is winding down, we naturally look back to what has been. Take time to reflect on the past year and notice what transitions have come to be. Create a collage in your journal symbolizing this year – it may be simple moments or major change that occurred. Or both. Let the images speak to you.

REMEMBER



“**SAVOR** life:
don't just breathe it in,
exhale this moment
to take in the next.”

**Fifth day of Christmas –
December 29**

*I was a stranger and you
welcomed me.*

– Matthew 25:37

Radical Hospitality is the practice of putting extraordinary effort and emphasis on making people feel welcome. It may require us leaving our comfort zone to reach out and say hello first. Noticing and bringing awareness to our surroundings supports our ability to welcome others. Think of those times when you have felt the warmth of welcome from another. How might you pass that on to another?

WELCOME

**Sixth day of Christmas –
December 30**

*Savor life: don't just breathe it
in, exhale this moment to take
in the next.*

– KC Rhoads

To savor is to enjoy. It is rich and satisfying. It engages our senses. What can you choose to savor today? The crunch of footsteps crossing a fresh snowfall? The smell of a pie in the oven? The bare branches framing a clear winter sky? The laughter playing a board game by the fire? Allow yourself to be immersed in your senses today. Linger. Taste the soup. Really taste it. With each spoonful. Did you notice that to savor you must also slow down? Make today a slow day.

SAVOR



“Pause. Breathe. Listen. **REFLECT.** Connect.”

**Seventh day of Christmas –
December 31**

*Pause. Breathe. Listen. Reflect.
Connect.*

– Rebekah Bremmer

Reflection is a form of unhurried consideration. It differs from remembering for it slows our pace and urges us to examine from multiple perspectives. With that understanding, think back across the year ending and using your journal, write without stopping for ten minutes. What theme or focus surfaces for you? Now write another ten minutes to go a bit deeper into understanding this year that is ending. What have you learned? What have you completed? Left undone?

REFLECT

**Eighth day of Christmas –
January 1**

*I'm gonna tell a real story. I'm
gonna start with my name.*

– Kendrick Lamarr

To name is to imbue with meaning, to give voice to. On this first day of 2022, take time to name your hopes and desires for the new year. You may choose also to sit quietly and allow a word to surface that will guide you in the months to come. The process from Christine Valtner Paintner can be found here: <https://abbeyofthearts.com/blog/2017/01/01/new-year-blessings-what-is-your-word-for-the-year-a-love-note-from-your-online-abbess/>

NAME



“Every day I see or hear something that more or less fills me with **DELIGHT**, that leaves me like a needle in the haystack of light.”

**Ninth day of Christmas –
January 2**

“Always we begin again.”
– St. Benedict

Consider replacing ‘resolution’ with renewal this year. Renewal evokes an ongoing process that is life affirming and restorative. Begin with considering the commitments and practices you would like to enliven again in your daily life. Simple things – perhaps continuing time for daily reflection. Reconnecting with your faith community. How can you engage more fully in your life?

RENEW

**Tenth day of Christmas –
January 3**

Everyday I see or hear something that more or less fills me with delight, that leaves me like a needle in the haystack of light.
– Mary Oliver

Delight. Joy. Pleasure. Happiness. Enthusiasm comes from the root word entheos, which means ‘in God’ and so to celebrate this day with enthusiasm and delight is to evoke the ways God is in and with each one of us. Be aware of the moments that evoke joy today and pause to become more fully aware of God’s presence in your life.

DELIGHT



“**FOLLOW** your heart
and **LISTEN** when it speaks to you.”

**Eleventh day of Christmas –
January 4**

Clarity and decisiveness come from the willingness to slow down to listen to and look at what's happening.

– Pema Chodron

For today bring intention to noticing the sounds of life.

Bring attention to the silence between sounds.

Listen deeply to a piece of music, observe the activity as your household comes to life.

LISTEN

**Twelfth day of Christmas –
January 5**

Follow your heart and listen when it speaks to you.

- unknown

Be willing and be open.

Trust your heart.

Where is God breaking into the world?

Where can we find the divine in unexpected places?

Be open to going there.

FOLLOW

ABOUT TAU CENTER

“Mercy is the great weaver,
collecting and binding the scattered
and broken parts of our lives
in a tapestry of Divine Love.”

– *Cynthia Bourgeault*



Established in 2008 by the Wheaton Franciscans, who live intentionally as a presence of blessing in our world, the Tau Center is committed to the transformation of our world by helping individuals awaken to the sacredness of life.

In the spirit of St. Francis and St. Clare of Assisi, Tau Center provides a peaceful and reflective environment for people seeking a deeper relationship with God, self, others and all of Creation.

Through the integration of body, mind and spirit, Tau Center is committed to offering diverse

experiences where individuals can nourish their spirit, find companions on their journey, and connect what they discover to meaning in their life and the world around them.

We offer a sacred space to assist individuals on their own spiritual journey – whether it is to reconnect with their inner-spirit or whether they are seeking a deeper relationship with God and the world around them. Our programs encourage an awakening of the spirit that leads to hope, healing, peace and transformation.

PROGRAMS AND OFFERINGS

Centering Prayer - Season of Advent 4 Week Series

Tuesday, November 30
December 7, 12, 21
10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.
ONLINE via Zoom

Facilitated by Laura Desmarais

"A new time is upon us, a great hope is before us... the Light has embraced us."

We invite you to take time for Reflection this Advent Season

A new Advent season is a time to journey within, to listen, listen with our hearts. It is through our hearts that we learn to open, to let go and to receive the fruits of the Spirit working within. We need this reminder more than ever as we shelter in and experience disconnectedness from other and ourselves. As we experience heartfelt love and acceptance within, we are better prepared to reach out to others and share these gifts with them.

Join us for Centering Prayer during Advent. Together we will join in silence and deep listening each session as we explore the vulnerable space of our open hearts through the practice of

Centering Prayer. Our group will meet via zoom four times. All are welcome.

November 30

First Week of Advent

December 7

Second Week of Advent

December 14

Third Week of Advent

December 21

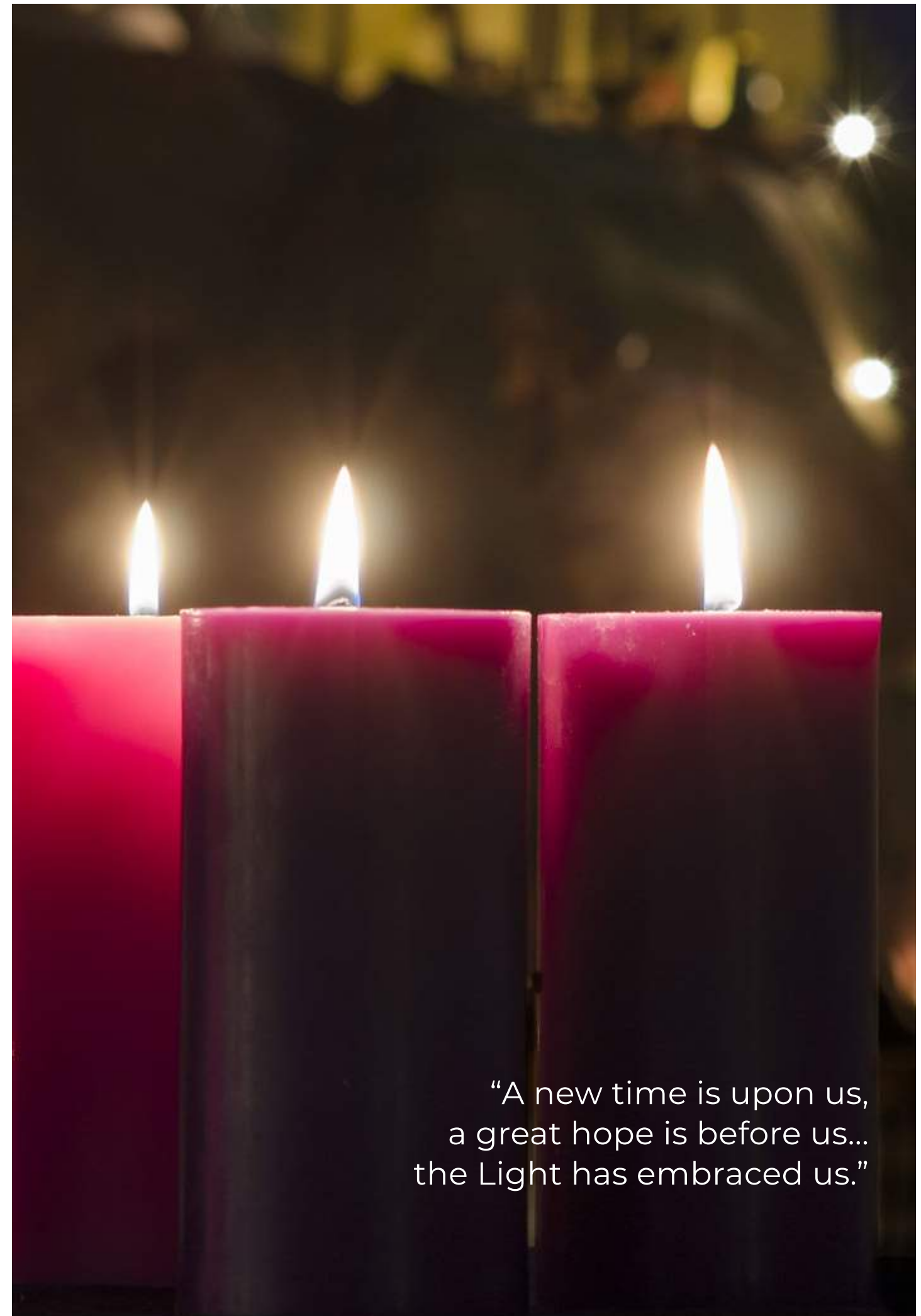
Fourth Week of Advent

One-time Registration is required by November 28 to receive the zoom link for each session. While attendance at all four sessions is encouraged, it is not required. For those new to Centering Prayer, we will send a short instruction video for viewing prior to the start of the series. Zoom link will be emailed the day prior to each session.

Contact us at taucenter@wfsisters.org if questions.

About our Presenter: Laura explored meditation while living in India over ten years ago. Since then she found herself drawn to Centering Prayer and has been influenced by Thomas Keating and Cynthia Bourgeault. She is a Spiritual Director and has led Centering Prayer with Sr Pat Irr, OSF.

TO REGISTER FOR
PROGRAMS PLEASE VISIT
WWW.TAUCENTER.ORG



**"A new time is upon us,
a great hope is before us...
the Light has embraced us."**

PROGRAMS AND OFFERINGS

Contemplating Miriam of Nazareth — Our Sister in the Communion of Saints

Saturday, December 4, 2021
9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

ONLINE via Zoom OR

Wednesday December 8, 2021
9:30 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

ONLINE via Zoom

Facilitated by Tammy Winn

Remembering Mary as a prophet in the communion of saints, a woman who is truly sister to our strivings, allows the power of her life to encourage an ever-deeper relationship with the living God in whom our spirits rejoice.

"We invite you to take time for Reflection to begin the Advent Season."

Based on the work of theologian Elizabeth A. Johnson, we will reflect upon and pray with the mother of Jesus, Mary (Miriam in Hebrew). Together we will approach Miriam's life in a historical way, allowing for new insights to inspire us. Additionally, we will ponder what God wishes to birth in our individual lives at this moment in time.

Our morning together will include time for small group conversation and reflection. While not required for attending this morning offering, reading *"Truly Our Sister"* by Elizabeth Johnson is suggested as preparation for our time together.

Registration is required four days prior to each session to receive the zoom link. Zoom link will be emailed the day prior to each session. Please note that this program is offered on two dates and is not two separate sessions - ***please choose your preferred date when registering.***

Contact us at taucenter@wfsisters.org if questions. Please note that Tau Center is closed for Thanksgiving, so you may not receive a response until Monday, November 29.

About our Presenter: Tammy Winn works as a recording artist, contemplative writer, and presenter. Her eclectic collection of compositions highlights her talent for thought provoking lyrics and soulful delivery. For more information, visit www.TammyWinn.com.

SEE PAGE 6 FOR TAMMY'S
WEEKLY REFLECTIONS



"We invite you to take time for Reflection to begin the Advent Season."



“God never gives someone a gift they are not capable of receiving. If he gives us the gift of Christmas, it is because we all have the ability to understand and receive it.”

– Pope Francis

Personal Retreat Day - Third Week of Advent (in-person)

December 13, 14, 15, 16, or 17
9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

*Self-guided - \$25.00
with Spiritual Direction Session
- \$75.00*

"A new time is upon us, a great hope is before us...the Light has embraced us."

We invite you to experience the stillness of Tau Center this Advent Season as we again reopen for in-person retreats. Come immerse yourself in the heart of the season through prayer, reflective reading, simple art-

making, journaling and time in nature strolling along the Peace Path or Cosmic Walk, weather permitting.

Your day begins at 9:00 a.m., with time to settle in and become familiar with our amenities and ends at a time of your choosing, no later than 4 p.m. Each retreat is intended to provide for quiet reflection time, in the midst of the holiday season.

Your retreat includes a private room, access to shared meditation and creative spirituality spaces. If desired, choose the Spiritual Direction Option to meet with a staff spiritual director for morning conversation as part of your experience with us.

Vaccination is required and masks must be worn when not alone in your private room. Our shared kitchen space includes a small refrigerator and microwave for your brown bag lunch. Coffee and Tea is provided.

Registration is required a minimum one week prior.

Contact us at taucenter@wfsisters.org if questions. Please note that Tau Center is closed for Thanksgiving, so you may not receive a response until Monday November 29.

Additional information will be sent as part of your registration confirmation.

Liturgy Schedule at Our Lady of the Angels Chapel

Advent Season

November 28, 10:30 a.m.
December 5, 10:30 a.m.
December 12, 10:30 a.m.
December 19, 10:30 a.m.

Christmas Season

December 24, Christmas Eve
December 25, Christmas Day
January 1, New Years Day

Current schedule at

www.wheatonfranciscan.org

STILL POINT

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