



# THE BISHOP'S BULLETIN



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# Rest in the solitude and silence of Advent

**Bishop Donald E. DeGrood**  
Ninth Bishop of  
the Diocese of  
Sioux Falls



**A**s a kid on the farm, when I was supposed to be doing chores in the old barn, I loved to sneak through the haybarn, exit out the back and go into the woods next to the creek. This was my “happy place” because the solitude and silence enabled the things in my heart, mind, imagination and memory to flow with great authenticity and freedom.

Regardless of where I lived, it was important for me to find my “happy places” of solitude and silence because they were the places where I felt most comfortable being my authentic self. They were also the places I could most easily experience the authentic “self” of God—that is his presence, grace and love. It was by the creek in the woods behind the old barn in solitude and silence where I sensed God calling me to be a priest.

Solitude and silence benefit us tremendously if we find our “happy places” where we pray, reflect, ponder, listen and receive what God wants to

share with us and what we want to share with him. It could be a prayer corner in our house, kneeling next to our bed in the morning or night to listen intently to God and share what is on our heart, in adoration, daily Mass, reading the Bible or driving in the car to work or other activities.

These are places where we can be our authentic selves so we can, in turn, experience the authentic “self” of God manifesting his love, mercy and spiritual graces. Such spiritual loving companionship with God fills our hearts with joy and peace. Samuel (1 Sm 3:9) and Elijah (1 Kgs 19:12) and other people in the Bible provide us with witnesses of finding God and God’s love or plan for them in solitude and silence.

However, if we seek out solitude and silence but isolate ourselves from God by not opening our heart, mind and will to him, we find ourselves humanly ruminating, imagining, trying to figure things out by ourselves, or being distracted by things like video

games or other things that fascinate our imagination. Such experiences eventually leave us empty, dry, lonely, bored and feeling isolated. So rather than loving intimacy through communion with God, which satisfies our deepest longings, we try to escape from the emptiness and loneliness by gratifying ourselves with worldly pleasures for the body or ego.

This Advent, I invite you to carve out time and space to go into solitude and silence with God, even if we can only do it for short periods because of demands of work and family. By doing this, I hope we all discover a deepening loving communion with God as he fills us with the spiritual graces.

I hope St. Augustine’s great expression becomes our own: “Oh God, our hearts are restless until they rest in you.” May our resting in the silence this Advent as we joyfully anticipate the coming of Christ at Christmas, each day and at the end of time, find us resting with delight in loving communion with God and others.

## DECEMBER

- 1 – 4 Yankton Deanery travel – Pastorates 13, 14 and 15
- 5 5:15 Mass and Operation Andrew Dinner, Christ the King, Sioux Falls
- 6 Pastors' meeting, Mitchell
- 7 12:00 Diocesan Finance Council, Catholic Pastoral Center
- 14 7:30 Christmas at the Cathedral Concert, Cathedral of Saint Joseph
- 15 7:30 Christmas at the Cathedral Concert, Cathedral of Saint Joseph
- 16 1:00 Christmas at the Cathedral Concert, Cathedral of Saint Joseph  
4:00 Stational Mass, Cathedral of Saint Joseph\*
- 7:30 Christmas at the Cathedral Concert, Cathedral of Saint Joseph
- 17 2:00 Christmas at the Cathedral Concert, Cathedral of Saint Joseph  
7:30 Christmas at the Cathedral Concert, Cathedral of Saint Joseph
- 23 4:00 Stational Mass, Cathedral of Saint Joseph\*
- 25 12:00 Midnight Mass, Solemnity of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, Cathedral of Saint Joseph
- 27 Seminarian holiday gathering Mass and dinner
- 30 4:00 Stational Mass, Cathedral of Saint Joseph\*

\*Broadcast on Keloland TV or livestream via [sfcatholic.org](http://sfcatholic.org)

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# THE BISHOP'S BULLETIN

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## Officials of the Diocese of Sioux Falls

Effective Sept. 30:

The Most Reverend Bishop Donald E. Degroot has granted **Deacon Daniel Sherban** a temporary leave of absence from assigned ministry.

Respectfully submitted,  
Thad Pals, Chancellor

# *Beauty, reverence and a smile* CAN BRING THEM BACK



By Katie Eskro

**A**ccording to Pew Research, only 39 percent of Catholics attend Mass at least once a week. A sobering 40 percent attend at the most once a month and 20 percent do not attend at all, or very rarely. Of the 60 percent of self-identified Catholics who do not attend Mass weekly, many likely attend Mass only on Christmas and Easter and maybe a few other times sprinkled in.

These numbers illustrate how quickly modern culture has shifted from religious faith being a central aspect of people's lives to something many people do every once in a while. Father Andrew Young, pastor at Risen Savior (Brandon) and St. Rose of Lima (Garretson) parishes, says, "We live in a world where there are all kinds of activities and things that compete for our time, especially on the weekends."

## THE REALITY

At its heart, the issue is not simply that families are too busy, but rather that they have lost sight or never fully experienced the reality of a relationship with Jesus. They have not experienced or do not believe that a sacramental life is relevant and vital to their happiness and health, regardless of how busy they may be.

"Families are always making choices as to what is the highest priority, and we hope that being with our church community and in the presence of Jesus Christ reigns paramount," Father Young says.

For those of us who do attend Mass weekly, not out of obligation alone but because we have experienced the love, power and life of Jesus through the sacramental life of the Church, it can be difficult to understand those who come to Mass infrequently. Most of us have family members or close friends who have chosen this path, and talking, listening and engaging with them about the faith can be daunting. Father Young says we should "keep inviting them and praying that they have a profound encounter with Christ."

We must remember, too, that we are not the only ones working, praying and hoping for people's return to a fully embraced Catholic life. Jesus' plan is beyond our comprehension, and while he invites us into his plan in many different ways, ultimately it is his creativity and pursuit of people that will bring them back to his Church. We must discern carefully the role we might play in this.

## WHAT WE CAN DO

Even though the numbers and the work in front of us can seem daunting, there are many ways we can work to build up the community of believers and directly and indirectly



Father Andrew Young is pastor of Pastorate 18 (Brandon and Garretson).

encourage people to come back to Mass.

One way we can work to bring people back to Mass is by our **witness** at Mass and outside of Mass. By just being ourselves and pursuing a life of charity and humility, we may attract people's interest and curiosity.

We can also witness by being real about the messiness of our life and not hiding

our struggles and our sufferings. We can show compassion when others are going through difficult times and offer to pray for them and help them in practical ways as applicable.

"It is really hard to draw someone to the faith and regular Mass attendance if the witness we give outside of the Church is not compatible with our Christian faith," Father Young says.

Another way we can have an effect on other people's choice to go to Mass is through **evangelization**. This is closely related to witnessing, as witnessing is one way of evangelizing. But evangelization also includes being prepared to defend, share and speak about our beliefs and our faith when invited and called upon.

Evangelization cannot just happen within the church walls. By virtue of our Baptism, we are all called to share our faith with those around us. Our priests and church staff members do not work where you work. They do not know the same people as you; they do not sit next to the same people that you do at sporting events. These are the places where *you* have a unique opportunity to share life with others.

This sharing of life is both being a witness and a doorway to further evangelization. Pray for these people, and if an opportunity arises and the Holy Spirit nudges, be ready to speak up about your faith practices. Invite them to Mass or a church event.

"Being involved in the local community is important, so people can see us living out our Catholic faith," Father Young adds. "Words of invitation can be powerful, but the example we give of love and support goes much further than words."

A third way we can encourage growth in our faith community and regular Mass attendance is through the **beauty and sacredness of the liturgy**. People are attracted to beauty

and joyful solemnity. A well-done liturgy helps people to enter in more fully to the celebration of the Mass and to have an encounter with Jesus.

"My philosophy is that Mass should be prayed reverently by the priest and that [the] faithful [should have] ample opportunities, per Vatican II, to draw the faithful into participation," Father Young says.

A fourth way we can encourage further Mass attendance is through **catechesis**. There is always more to learn about our faith and to grow in our relationship with Jesus. Growing in our knowledge and understanding about God, the liturgy and our Church can help us to enter in more deeply to the liturgy. It can also help those who are interested in Mass but desire to understand more about it to have a more full experience and excitement about the liturgy.

Father Young says this catechizing cannot happen only during Mass. "Teaching the faith is important and something that often we do not do a great job at. It is very difficult to teach simply from the pulpit but [it is important to] provide opportunities for the faithful to engage their faith outside of Mass."

At Risen Savior, Father Young has encouraged this ongoing catechesis—which is always about our relationship with Jesus—by having Theology on Tap regularly and parish missions each year.

## LIVING WITH TRUST AND HOPE

For those people whom we see only on Christmas and Easter, and perhaps a few other times sprinkled in, it is important to greet them with a smile and kindness. "You never know how welcoming someone to Mass might help them make it a weekly priority," Father Young says.

We also can be grateful and joyful that they are coming to share in these great feasts with the larger community, as we pray for them and hope that they eventually will enter into the life of the Church more fully.

"Even if some families make the choice to not go to Mass throughout the year, our Lord still tugs on them to come and celebrate the birth of Jesus and the Resurrection. Our hope is that when they come to worship, they will desire to be with our Lord weekly," Father Young says.

We can trust that God's plan is greater than ours. He pursues all those who go astray (including us) and calls us to himself—we have only to listen for his voice and to follow him. In this way, we can have great trust and hope in his plan and in the future of our Church.



WAITING IN SILENCE,  
*waiting in hope*

By Laura Melius

“Waiting in silence, waiting in hope, we are your people, we long for you, Lord. Lord God, ever with us, Emmanuel. Come Lord Jesus. Maranatha!”

These words from the Advent hymn, “Waiting in Silence,” speak of the beautiful, blessed quiet of the penitential season of Advent. What, exactly, is silence? Why is silence so vital to a healthy spiritual life, especially in Advent?

## WHAT IS SILENCE?

We know what silence is not—we live in a world that operates in direct opposition to silence. Bob Billotto, parishioner at St. Joseph Parish in Eureka, experiences this in his daily life.

“Our culture seems to opt for noise everywhere,” he said. “If you enter an elevator, there is music. It’s so common that we call it ‘elevator music.’ Grocery stores and department stores also have music piped in over the loudspeakers. It’s as if our culture believes that no one could survive without at least some conscious or unconscious distraction.”



Bob Billotto is a parishioner at St. Joseph Parish in Eureka.

“The worldly culture is largely concerned with economy, to keep us producing and consuming products,” Father Darin Schmidt, parochial vicar of Pastorate 14, added. “Silence tends to interrupt this cycle of distractions and consumerism. If we turn off the noise, then we’re no longer buying or clicking or consuming whatever it is people are trying to sell us.”

As we seek solace from this background noise that consumes our days, we can hopefully find quiet stillness, if even for a few moments. This external silence will often help us find an environment that is more conducive to prayer and communication with God. However, still, in those quiet places, we may find that we require yet another type of silence.

Dawn Melius, parishioner at St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Faulkton, said, “When we are speaking of spiritual silence, there is more to it than being where it is audibly quiet. In the still of the night, when all is quiet in the world, one can lay awake with a mind full of racing ideas, thoughts, fears and worries.”

Bob has also experienced this in prayer. “Silence is more than just the absence of external noise. Many times when I pray, I’m distracted by internal noise. By that, I mean that all of the thoughts that I have *during* prayer can be a hindrance *to* my prayers.”

Father Schmidt acknowledges that between external and internal silence, internal silence is of more significance in our spiritual lives. It is usually more difficult to attain, since finding a place of internal silence is a habit that must be developed over time.

“Someone who has built a habit of internal silence and watchfulness over his own distractions and worries can eventually maintain a level of internal silence even in the midst of external noise and activity,” he explained.



Dawn Melius is a parishioner at St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Faulkton.

This seeking of internal silence, or “recollection,” helps us to re-collect our attention and mental focus. Too many responsibilities, concerns and distractions can leave our attention and focus too inadequate to properly attend to them. As we hone this internal silence habit, we will find our time of prayer, introspection and contemplation to be more fruitful.

## ACHIEVING SILENCE AMID THE NOISE

Father Schmidt further explained that achieving internal silence allows us to delve deeper into our innermost questions and desires, our desire for God and his eternal perspective. When we are internally quieted, “We see the people and events in our lives as God sees them, in light of his work to bring us to salvation through Christ to the everlasting life in heaven,” Father Schmidt said. “Without silence, we often end up living and praying very superficially and lacking focus, mainly occupied with just the latest distractions and immediate concerns without understanding them in a broader context.”

Dawn says she gives her relationship with Jesus the same attention she does other relationships in her life, and she incorporates both external and internal silence to nurture those conversations.

“Think about other relationships. If you were to only spend time with a person at big events and in crowded, noisy environments, how well would you really know them, and how well would they know you?” she said. “How deep would that relationship be? In contrast, if you spent one-on-one time with someone, in a quiet environment having conversations, how much better would you each know one another? When developing a relationship with Jesus, it is through prayer; prayer is conversation with Jesus. And conversations are two-way dialogue.”

When seeking silence in the midst of a noisy world, there are some practical steps we can take to begin.

“One of the first steps is just to realize how much time and mental energy we are spending consuming the news or social media and other diversions and entertainment, and to be more deliberate in how we use these,” Father Schmidt suggested. “We might set time limits for children, but all of us need limits and discipline in these areas.”

Then, he suggested that the next step is to find those times in the day where we can spend even a few quiet moments with God. “Sometimes it’s better just to leave the radio or TV off, or the music or podcasts, to be alone with God and more present to one another.”

As a mother of five children, Dawn has seen opportunities for silence change through the seasons of her life.

“At this stage of life, I often find myself awake in the night,” she said.

“Sometimes it is quite frustrating, laying there thinking about the need to get back to sleep, which does not help one go back to sleep! Instead of this, I have turned this time into an opportunity for very quiet solitude, prayer and contemplation. Sometimes, I think that I am awakened because someone needs my prayers, so I pray a Rosary in the middle of the night. Using these unexpected times for prayer makes these moments a blessing, to others as well as myself.”

## WHY SILENCE IN ADVENT?

“Advent is known for silence, at least here in the northern hemisphere, because nature itself is slowing down, bracing for winter,” Father Schmidt said. “Advent also coincides with the shortening of daylight hours—in an analogous way—a type of ‘silence’ for our eyes in the longer hours of darkness that come over the world as we approach the winter solstice.”

Bob added to Father Schmidt’s thoughts. “Catholic author Matthew Kelly says that we all need ‘silence, solitude and stillness’ every day if we are to communicate with Jesus.



Father Darin Schmit is parochial vicar of Pastorate 14.

If Advent means to prepare for our Lord’s coming, then silence and silent prayer are very important, not just for that preparation but also for communication with Jesus.”

Hope, Father Schmidt said, is the virtue most closely associated with Advent, as we hope, keep watch and wait with perseverance for the dawning of Christ in the midst of the world’s darkness.

We begin to physically light the darkness as parish communities at Mass each Sunday of Advent, with the lighting of the Advent wreath candles. The four candles, three purple and one rose, each have their own special meaning, as an additional candle is lit each Sunday until the Nativity of the Lord. The first candle represents hope, the second peace, the third joy and the fourth love—all virtues we embrace during this season.

Father Schmidt acknowledged that although most Catholics are probably more aware of the traditional Lenten practices of prayer, fasting and almsgiving, not as many tend to know about or put Advent traditions into practice.

“One of the main traditions is keeping candlelight vigils, to pray and spend time with God in the morning or evening during these days of greater darkness,” Father Schmidt said. “Make a point to start an Advent tradition this year. Set a time for yourself, even for your whole family, to gather together in the evening, for example, maybe to read a passage from Isaiah or the weekday Mass readings, and then just spend a few minutes in silence, maybe shorter to start with, depending on the ages of those involved. Then share and pray and give thanks. Light a candle and just watch the flame for a while. Wake up early to just sit and listen as the world around you gradually wakes up to begin the day.”



## A HABIT OF SILENCE

When continuing the practice of silence even after Advent, Father Schmidt suggests making and keeping appointments with God for quiet time in prayer. If it is difficult to keep this appointment consistently, ask a friend or family member to help with accountability.

“We won’t grow in physical strength and health without consistency and a commitment to regular exercise. The same is true in the spiritual life,” he said.

Taking the time for silence has been personally valuable in Bob’s prayer life all through the year. “Sometimes, when I read my Bible at home, I will read a passage from Scripture and it’s as if Jesus was speaking directly to me,” Bob said. “I have even found myself saying out loud, ‘I hear you, Lord.’”

Dawn looks to Jesus’ example and what he sought at key moments in his life.

“When it was most important to communicate with the Father, what did Jesus do? He took Simon, James and John up on a mountain when the Transfiguration happened,” Dawn said. “When he was pleading intensely with God prior to the Passion, he left his friends and went off by himself in the Garden of Gethsemane. Forty days in the desert is another example of time alone, in the quiet.”

For those seeking an extended silent time in prayer, several opportunities for silent retreats are available in the diocese throughout the year. Broom Tree Retreat Center, near Irene, and Abbey of the Hills, near Marvin, offer retreats, from one-day, five to eight-days or even 30 days. Father Schmidt said these retreats have been very well received by the people of the diocese.

“I don’t think I’ve ever heard of anyone really regretting giving such time to God and to their spiritual health,”

he said. “Even retreats that seem more ‘uneventful,’ as far as sensible consolations or spiritual insights go, we often see later on how God was nourishing us in more hidden ways through those and preparing us for upcoming trials.”

The shorter, one-day retreats can be helpful for those with busier schedules or those who are new to the concept of a silent retreat.

“It’s enough at least to alleviate some fears and anxieties for those who think, ‘I couldn’t possibly shut up long enough for something like that,’” Father Schmidt explained. “These retreats often offer an introduction to *Lectio Divina*, a prayerful reading of Scripture, or imaginative prayer, which shows us how to pay attention to how different words of the Scripture strike us and interact with our experiences and desires. Imaginative prayer helps place ourselves in the scenes and events described in Scripture and reflect on how God is speaking to us.”

Father Schmidt suggests that it may take a whole day or two days of more deliberate prayer to really quiet our minds and hearts from distractions and to fully experience the spiritual benefits of a silent retreat.

“If there is ever any way to fit one of these longer retreats into your schedule, there’s nothing else quite like it to bolster your spiritual life,” he encouraged. “It may be similar to a football or volleyball camp during the summer that really strengthens the fundamen-

tals and can serve as a foundation for improvement throughout the rest of the year.

“Not every diocese has retreat centers hosting such powerful spiritual events as these silent retreats of various lengths where God reaffirms his love for his sons and daughters and helps us to respond and make a gift of ourselves back to him,” Father Schmidt continued. “We shouldn’t underestimate the impact and benefit that is bestowed on our whole diocese through the prayer and encounters with God taking place at Broom Tree, Abbey of the Hills and other retreat ministries offered.”

There’s a phrase carved on the front of the altar at Sts. Isidore and Maria Chapel at Broom Tree: In the silence, God speaks.

“When Elijah went to meet God on the mountain, he witnessed fire and earthquake, driving wind and storm, but it was in a tiny whispering sound, a still, small voice that Elijah recognized the presence of God and veiled his face out of reverence,” Father Schmidt said. “It can seem scary at first to practice silence, to be alone with our thoughts for any length of time, but we aren’t ever truly alone. God is with us. Let’s give him the time and opportunity, the space of silence to hear him speak to us. Through the quieting of our own minds and hearts and the noise around us, may God find us attentive to his voice.”

## Go deeper

Visit [abbeyofthehills.org](http://abbeyofthehills.org) or [broom-tree.org](http://broom-tree.org) for more information on silent retreat opportunities in the diocese.



Getty Image/princessdlaf

## Is there a proper way to genuflect and receive the Eucharist?

Q

*Can you explain the proper way to genuflect towards the Eucharist, as well as the proper way to receive Holy Communion?*

A

We've received a few questions along these and similar lines over the last few months, which is not surprising given that we are in the midst of the National Eucharistic Revival. As we prepare to celebrate anew Jesus' birth, it seems fitting to talk about how we offer him adoration in gesture and in the reception of Holy Communion. (Fun fact: there's a fascinating foreshadowing of the Eucharist in Luke's account of Jesus' birth. We're told that Mary laid Jesus in a manger, which is a feeding trough for animals, an early hint at how Jesus would provide spiritual nourishment by giving himself to us in the Holy Eucharist.)

We'll begin with a couple introductory remarks. First and foremost, we must remember the *why* of questions like this: *why* do we genuflect toward the Eucharist? *Why* are we concerned with how to receive Holy Communion? The answer is simple: because the Eucharist is Jesus himself, the Second Person of the Trinity, God himself.

And that leads to the second introductory remark: because Jesus is God himself, we worship him, we adore him, with all of our being, both soul and body. We express ourselves with our bodies, and that includes our adoration of our God. Just as we might use a certain gesture (a wave of a hand) to indicate a warm greeting, so, too, do we use another gesture (bending one knee to the ground) to indicate adoration.

A final introductory remark: it's also important to remember that the meaning of gestures is somewhat culturally dependent. In other words, the way that, for example, adoration is conveyed in one culture might be different from how it is conveyed in another. And this can be true within the same broad tradition. For example, while for many Catholics the gesture of adoration is genuflection, for some Catholics (those who practice one of the Eastern Rites), adoration is often conveyed by a deep bow at the waist.

With those remarks in mind, let's turn now to genuflection. As already noted, the purpose of genuflecting is to give adoration to God. So, when we enter a church or a chapel where a tabernacle is, we genuflect towards the tabernacle as an act of adoration of Jesus, who is present therein. (Many Catholics grow up thinking we are genuflecting towards the altar, but that's only because of the common physical proximity between the altar and the tabernacle; the latter is always the focus of our genuflection. The altar is certainly a holy object, which is why we bow toward it, but we genuflect to God.)

It's important to know that there is no formal teaching about how one is to genuflect, but over time, certain customs have evolved. Specifically, adoration is shown by genuflecting with the *right* knee. (Historically, one would show one's allegiance to an earthly ruler by genuflecting with the *left* knee.) In addition, it's common to do a "double genuflection" (kneeling on both knees for a moment) when the Eucharist is exposed in a monstrance, as a greater sign of adoration.

As with all such actions, it's important that body and soul be united in intention. We ought not genuflect merely out of habit or custom, but we ought to do so with an awareness of why we are doing so—to greet Jesus with an act of humble submission to him as our Lord.

Similar points apply to the reception of Holy Communion. Again, the specific form of reception—either on the tongue or in the hand—has varied over time. But in this case, the Church can and does specify how one is to receive. While most of us are used to being able to receive in either mode, the ability to receive on the hand is something a bishop permits in his diocese (as most bishops in the U.S. have), while receiving on the tongue requires no special permission from the bishop (see, for example, St. John Paul II’s Letter *Dominicae Cena*e [On the Mystery and Worship of the Eucharist], n. 11.9 and the *General Instruction on the Roman Missal*, nn. 160-161).

Similarly, while most of us today are accustomed to receive Communion while standing, it is permitted to receive while kneeling as well (some churches have and use their Communion rail for this purpose).

As noted with genuflecting, it’s crucial that body and soul have the same intention. Whatever the mode or posture of reception, we ought to have awe and gratitude for what is happening: we are receiving Jesus Christ himself into our body and soul in Holy Communion.

Finally, it’s important that we avoid making rash judgments about others in these matters. We are unable to read their hearts, and therefore, we ought not draw any conclusions nor make any judgments because of their mode or posture of reception.

As we continue through the Eucharistic Revival and as we approach the great feast of Christmas, may we rejoice in Jesus’ presence among us, and in both body and soul, may we cry out together “O come, let us adore him!”



Be sure to check out the additional resources at [sfcatholic.org/answer](http://sfcatholic.org/answer).

If you have a question you need an answer to, email [rkranz@sfcatholic.org](mailto:rkranz@sfcatholic.org).

*Chris Burgwald holds a doctorate in theology and is the director of discipleship formation for the Diocese of Sioux Falls.*

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# Domestic church traditions ground our faith



Lois Heron is a parishioner at the Cathedral of Saint Joseph.

By Lois Heron

**T**he Broadway musical “The Fiddler on the Roof” is about a Russian village that strives to protect the traditions of Judaism to keep their religious culture alive and thriving as the pre-Holocaust world threatens to destroy them. The story’s protagonist is Tevya, who has a running dialogue

with God throughout the musical. His desire to keep the tradition alive drives him to his knees about how he raises his family. He’s a lovable character because his struggle is easy to relate to in every age.

At one point in the musical, he and his wife dialogue about their struggles in keeping the traditions of their faith front and foremost for their family amidst the inevitable changes they face in the culture. One of the most tender songs between the husband and wife relays what I believe you and I feel as parents and grandparents.

Sunrise, sunset. Sunrise, sunset,  
Swiftly fly the years.  
One season following another,  
Laden with happiness and tears.

What words of wisdom can I give them?  
How can I help to ease their way?

We must ask ourselves the same questions if we hope to vibrantly live the Sacred Tradition of our Catholic faith in our domestic church today and in future generations.

How can we do that?

I suggest that the daily, weekly, monthly and yearly small “t” traditions we practice within the culture of our family support the capital “T” traditions of the faith. We must be attentive to what habits and dispositions we form daily to protect our family and future generations from forgetting what they believe and why they believe it.

The orthodox Jewish home stands on three pillars we most likely recognize: the Torah (the Law of God), service to God and acts of human kindness. We are Judeo-Christians in that we are the extension and fulfillment of the history of salvation recorded in the Old Testament and fulfilled in the New Testament. And through Jesus Christ’s sacrifice for us once and for all, we are united to God for his good purpose. God’s Word is living and active, guiding us today as it did as it was recorded.

The Shema (Deuteronomy 6) alluded to in the musical is a declaration to adhere to as we raise a faithful Christian family. To do otherwise is to risk forgetting the purpose of our vocation as parents and grandparents. When we forget or are apathetic toward what we are about and why we observe our faith traditions, we are in danger of our children and future generations walking away from the faith.

It is not enough to say, “That’s just what we do,” as Catholic Christians. Our faith in God is to be lived purposefully, supported by faith and reason and action. Lack of attention leads to a lack of understanding, giving way to a lack of appreciation. All this culminates in a dismissal of the ancient traditions that sustain and frame the domestic church.

Beyond ensuring our children attend religious education classes and Sunday Mass each week, where do we form our Christian identity? In the domestic church!

We take care to keep the faith vibrant and life-giving 168 hours a week in our family’s life. The active attention to the integrity of the faith is reflected in our thoughts, words, actions and the choices we make for our family, and that forms the domestic church traditions, which will guard our families against relegating our faith in God to just another option in a world of shinier, but inferior, options.

## Resource recommendations:

**The Catholic All Year Compendium:  
Liturgical Living For Real Life  
by Kendra Tierney**

**The Catholic Home:  
Celebrations and Traditions for Holidays,  
Feast Days, and Every Day  
by Meredith Gould**

**Theology of Home:  
Finding the Eternal in the Everyday  
by Carrie Gress, PhD**

We can't read the words of the Shema without noting how pivotal the actions are in fulfilling the ordinance. God directs Moses to remind the people: "The Lord is our God, the Lord alone! Therefore, you shall love the Lord, your God, with your whole heart, and with your whole being, and with your whole strength" (Dt 6:4-5). Then he instructs the people, "Take to heart these words which I command you today. Keep repeating them to your children. Recite them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you get up. Bind them on your arm as a sign and let them be as a pendant on your forehead. Write them on the doorposts of your houses and on your gates. . . . But keep the commandments of the Lord, your God, and the decrees and the statutes he has commanded you. Do what is right and good in the sight of the Lord, that it may go well with you, and you may enter in and possess the good land which the Lord promised on oath to your ancestors, driving all your enemies out of your way, as the Lord has promised" (Dt 6:6-9 17-19).

Friends, we live in a culture that is anti-Christ, which is the enemy at war against us. It is the enemy we must thrust out before us one deliberate action at a time. In the words of Tevya, "Without our traditions, our lives would be as shaky as a Fiddler on the Roof."

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**Undone: A Healing Retreat**  
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**Couples Retreat**  
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**January 16, 2024**  
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- The Path to Ordinary Holiness with St. Francis DeSales directed by Father Tom Anderson

**February 13, 2024**  
**Romance in Sacred Scripture**  
- Man and Woman Made for Love directed by Father Joe Forcelle

**March 5, 2024**  
-Directed by Father Nick Haiar

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## Is your smartphone interrupting your marriage?

By Heidi Comes

Experts agree that communication in relationships, especially marriages, is one key to their success. Open lines of communication, providing feedback and active listening are all necessary to keep a couple on the road to a healthy marriage.

Seems simple enough, but many couples often let one little thing get in the way of that healthy communication: their smartphone.

Just like in all areas of life, technology has come slamming into the boundaries of marriage and presented all sorts of challenges for couples, especially in the realm of communication. A device such as a smartphone, meant to facilitate communication and bring connectivity to those far from us, has managed to create walls within our homes. By picking up our phones and scrolling through social media or checking our fantasy football line-up one more time, it has become too easy to distract and distance ourselves from those we love the most.

The enemy has intentionally disguised the trap by convincing us that we are connecting with people in our lives when we look at their photos on Facebook. What we don't see is that we are isolating ourselves from those right in front of us, especially our spouses.

### Captivated by a smartphone

There is something so powerful about being desired. As a married person, it is thrilling to know that someone is waiting for you, is choosing you and is captivated by you.



This is the spark that keeps a seasoned marriage from growing cold. It isn't about the grand gestures, exotic trips or lavish gifts. It's those moments when we feel chosen and thought about—when the one we love sees us and we know it.

Sadly, our devices are stealing away those moments. Our attention is captivated by something impersonal. It's tough to make eye contact with our spouse across a room when we are staring at a screen. Instead of looking for those opportunities, too often we take the spare minute we find ourselves with to do a quick check on our phone to see if anyone has shared anything new or if that email we were expecting came through.

Two people sitting in the same room just feet away from each other can be lost in their own world with people and events happening miles away. It creates a whole new challenge for couples to find themselves captivated by their spouse instead of their device.

It is easy to convince ourselves that we deserve the downtime. Family life, marriage and careers are physically and emotionally demanding. Everyone needs time to unwind and relax.

By our human nature, we need times of decompression. We need space to settle our hearts and minds before jumping into the next big thing. We were created this way. The lie is that we find that decompression in a device.

Those quiet moments our soul longs for can't be satisfied with the silent, but all too visual noise our smartphones provide. We will not find rest and peace in our devices.

Almost all spouses can agree that allowing each other the freedom to unwind and relax is important, but most would also agree that seeing our beloved lost in their smartphone leaves us feeling forgotten and alone.

## Changing the narrative

This isn't about shaming or blaming; it is about encouragement and love. Those with total control over their habits are the exception. We have all seen it when we are out in

public: a family out to eat at a restaurant, a table of friends or even a couple on a date night, and everyone has a device in their hands. When we see it we cringe; we may even be repulsed by it. But do we recognize it in ourselves?

As Christian couples, we are not immune to the pitfalls of the enemy. And we shouldn't be blind to the fact that it is indeed the desire and intention of the Devil to destroy what is good. Even those with the best intentions need reminders to lay down their device and engage with what is right in front of them.

So how do we take back control? How do we change the narrative?

Start simply. Grand plans rarely come to fruition. "I will not pick up my device at all tomorrow!" This sounds noble but most likely isn't practical or even achievable. Try to have open discussions about phone usage at times when *neither spouse is currently holding theirs*. Most of us are much more open to a discussion when we don't feel like it's a lecture in disguise.

Together think of small ways you can begin making big changes. Some examples may include:

- Before I look at my phone for the day, I will engage with my spouse.
- When my spouse is in the room, my phone will stay in my pocket, *or better yet, in another room*.
- If we watch a show together, our phones will be on silent.
- Date nights, phone free.
- While riding in the car, I will visit with my spouse, not mindlessly scroll.
- I'll use my phone with intentionality, sending messages of love to my spouse throughout the day.

Simple steps in the right direction will produce positive outcomes. It will take repetition for our spouses to recognize the changes we are making. Be patient, both with yourself and your beloved. Sometimes there is hurt that needs healing, and that doesn't happen overnight. Don't give up even if your efforts go unrecognized initially.

This type of change requires a continued commitment to being the best version of ourselves every day. It is through the sacramental grace of marriage that we are able to lay down our selfish desires and persevere in love. As you put continued effort into being better, you can trust that God's grace will sustain you and bless your marriage.



A depiction of Pope Saint Gregory the Great by Jacopo Vignali as found on the ceiling of the library in the Dominican convent of Santa Maria Novella in Florence.

Public Domain

# What is the history and purpose of **ADVENT?**



Father Zach Schaeftbauer is parochial vicar of Pastorate 23.

By Father Zach Schaeftbauer

According to the Church’s liturgical tradition, the celebration of any major feast of a higher dignity was to be preceded by a fast, otherwise known as a vigil (from the Latin, *vigilia*, meaning “wakefulness”). The vigil was literally a time of sleeplessness and “watching” for the coming feast. The vigil evening was, therefore, marked with fasting, prayers of atonement and other peni-

tential practices that persisted throughout the night watch.

Although the vigil Mass was considered part of the coming holiday, it was never treated with the same solemnity as the feast day itself. Rather, the liturgical setting took on a more serious character; the Gloria and Alleluia verse were absent, the Mass prayers spoke of repentance, and the music was somber and much simpler. Even the vesture of the priest was affected. In fact, until the liturgical reforms of

1970, the priest was required to wear violet vestments at all vigil Masses, for the color violet signifies a penitential disposition due to its naturally darker hue and subdued tone.

With the dawning of the feast day, however, all penances were cast aside, and the glorious and joyful celebrations of the holy day began. Such was the case for certain privileged feast days in the Church’s calendar.

Nevertheless, our liturgical tradition



also attests to the fact that the most solemn feast days in the life of the Church require more than a single day of preparation. Actually, they require an *entire season*. By the time of St. Gregory the Great in the early 600s, the two highest feasts in the Roman Rite were that of Easter and Christmas. In anticipation of the former, Christians of ancient Rome (from about the middle of the fourth century) maintained roughly a 40-day period of fasting and penance, which today we call the season of Lent. Christmas, however, only gained importance in Rome at a much later date, making the development of the season of Advent and its distinctive characteristics a more complex story.

By the year 336, the Feast of the Nativity garnered universal acceptance in the Roman Church as a feast worthy of commemoration. Yet, this recognition did not immediately place it on the same level as the Lord's Resurrection. Prior to Christmas attaining special prominence in the life of the Roman Church, the Christians of Rome observed a month-long fast in December, not in anticipation of Christmas, but as a reminder to always keep one's heart ready for the "advent," or second coming, of Christ. The reason for this is because both the civil and agricultural years concluded in December. In fact, Dec. 25 was considered the beginning of the new year in Rome since at least the early fourth century.

As the sermons of Pope St. Leo the Great in the mid 400s bear witness, it was only natural that Christians in Rome should see the end of the year as an analogy for the end of time itself, when Christ would return in all his glory to judge the living and the dead. Thus, for several centuries, Roman Christianity maintained two distinct but concurring observances: a month of penance in preparation for the end times and a liturgical feast on the 25th of December in honor of the birth of Jesus Christ. The idea of fasting in

explicit preparation for Christmas, however, originated outside of Rome and at a much later date.

The season of Advent—as we know it today—came into existence in Rome during the pontificate of Gregory the Great at the end of the sixth century. Thanks to his liturgical genius, the two contending themes of preparation—that of anticipating the end times and that of celebrating Christ's birth in the flesh—were assimilated into one season of expectation. This explains the dual nature of Advent as evidenced in the liturgy itself. The readings and prayers for the first two weeks of the season proclaim to us the second coming of Christ at the end of time, while the third and fourth weeks speak of his first coming in the flesh and our need to receive him in the present moment.

For Gregory, though, the two inten-

tions are not in opposition but are, in fact, complementary: both comings of Christ demand preparation on our part. Hence, Advent—like Lent and other ancient vigils of the Roman Rite—bears the marks of a penitential season: violet vestments, omission of the Gloria, less frequent use of musical instruments, and the like, alongside our own individual disciplines of fasting and penance.

Advent, therefore, is a season of preparation to receive Christ in whatever way he chooses to come to us. The Christian who empties himself of sin and evil desires through fasting and penance can in turn be filled with either the goodness and grace of the liturgy or with the joys of future glory. For to prepare for Christmas is, simultaneously, to prepare for the advent of Christ at the end of time. We need only to remain vigilant.



# What are the **O ANTIPHONS** of Advent?

A depiction of the Most Holy Theotokos (Mother of God) at the ancient Shio-Mgvime Monastery in Georgia.

**Y**ou may have heard someone mention the O Antiphons of Advent, or you may have seen our yearly posts highlighting these on social media. But what are they?

Outside of the Mass, the Church encourages (and requires if you're a priest) the lay faithful to participate in the Liturgy of the Hours. These are daily prayers offered during certain hours throughout the day. One of the principal prayers offered is called Vespers or Evening Prayer.

During Evening Prayer, the Magnificat of Mary (from the first chapter of Luke's Gospel) is prayed. Before and after the Magnificat, an antiphon is always said. These antiphons usually serve to remind us of the liturgical season or feast day.

In the days leading up to Christmas (Dec. 17-23), these antiphons take on a more profound tone of anticipation,

reminding us of the great solemnity that is coming. According to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, "The Roman Church has been singing the 'O Antiphons' since at least the eighth century."

**Dec. 17:** O Wisdom of our God Most High, guiding creation with power and love: come to teach us the path of knowledge!

**Dec. 18:** O Leader of the House of Israel, giver of the Law to Moses on Sinai: come to rescue us with your mighty power!

**Dec. 19:** O Root of Jesse's stem,

sign of God's love for all his people: come to save us without delay!

**Dec. 20:** O Key of David, opening the gates of God's eternal Kingdom: come and free the prisoners of darkness!

**Dec. 21:** O Radiant Dawn, splendor of eternal light, sun of justice: come and shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death!

**Dec. 22:** O King of all nations and keystone of the Church: come and save man, whom you formed from the dust!

**Dec. 23:** O Emmanuel, our King and Giver of Law: come to save us, Lord our God!



Consider meditating on these antiphons this Advent. If you want to take it a step further, try diving into the beautiful prayers in the Liturgy of the Hours. You can access it online at [divineoffice.org](http://divineoffice.org).



**BROOKINGS** – Jerry and Gerry Anshutz will celebrate their 65th anniversary on Dec. 30. They have 4 children, 7 grandchildren and 6 great-grandchildren and are members of St. Thomas More Parish.



**DELL RAPIDS** – Robert and Carol Mergen celebrated their 60th anniversary on Nov. 30. They have 3 children, 5 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren and are members of St. Mary Parish.



**FAULKTON** – Dale and Kim Holt celebrated their 50th anniversary on Nov. 9. They have 4 children, 9 grandchildren and are members of St. Thomas Parish.



**GROTON** – Jerry and Carol Wieseler will celebrate their 50th anniversary on Dec. 8. They have 6 children, 12 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild and are members of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish.



**HOWARD** – Marvin and Janet Kizer celebrated their 50th anniversary on Nov. 3. They have 3 children, 12 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild and are members of St. Agatha Parish.



**HURON** – Leroy and Rose Slepikas celebrated their 65th anniversary on Nov. 10. They have 5 children, 8 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren and are members of Holy Trinity Parish.



**LAKE ANDES** – Ed and Betty Bruner celebrated their 75th anniversary on Nov. 25. They have 4 children, 13 grandchildren, 17 great-grandchildren and 6 great-great-grandchildren and are members of St. Mark Parish.



**SALEM** – Steve and Susan Leber celebrated their 25th anniversary on Nov. 20. They have 3 children and are members of St. Mary Parish.



**SALEM** – Jim and Lynn Gottlob will celebrate their 50th anniversary on Dec. 1. They have 4 children, 9 grandchildren and are members of St. Mary Parish.



**SELBY** – Merlyn and Lucille Melcher will celebrate their 65th anniversary on Dec. 13. They have 3 children, 8 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren and are members of St. Anthony Parish.



**SIoux FALLS** – Scot and Rachel Fitzgerald celebrated their 25th anniversary on Nov. 7. They are members of Cathedral of Saint Joseph Parish.



**SISSETON** – Gene and Joy Hrnrcir will celebrate their 70th anniversary on Dec. 1. They have 6 children (1 deceased), 11 grandchildren, 9 great-grandchildren and 1 great-great grandchild and are members of St. Peter Parish.



**TEA** – Wayne and Colleen Boddicker will celebrate their 55th anniversary on Dec. 28. They have 2 children, 2 grandchildren and are members of St. Nicholas Parish.



**WATERTOWN** – Nick and Diane Kranz will celebrate their 50th anniversary on Dec. 29. They have 4 children, 4 grandchildren and are members of Immaculate Conception Parish.



**YANKTON** – Mike and Arlyne Brim will celebrate their 50th anniversary on Dec. 15. They have 1 child, 2 grandchildren and are members of Sacred Heart Parish.

## ANNIVERSARY SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

We accept anniversary submissions for the following anniversary years: 25, 50, 55, 60, 65, 70 and 75. We include them in the issue of the month of the anniversary or the following month's issue. Submissions received for later issues will not be included. Photos will only be included in the sfcatholic.org website edition.

Send a color photo, your anniversary information and a self-addressed, stamped envelope by Dec. 6 for inclusion in the February 2024 edition to:

The Bishop's Bulletin  
523 N. Duluth Ave.  
Sioux Falls, SD 57104

or email to:  
bwingen@sfcatholic.org.

## CORRECTION

In the anniversaries section of the November Bishop's Bulletin, we listed the information for Doug and Marcie Spielmann's children incorrectly. The correct information for their children is as follows: They have 3 children, 9 grandchildren (2 deceased) and 17 great-grandchildren. We apologize for the error.

# Father Antonio W. Ramos dies at 62



Father Antonio Wincenty Ramos, 62, died on Oct. 15, 2023, at his residence. Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Nov. 6 at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church. Burial was at St. Michael Cemetery in Sioux Falls.

Antonio Wincenty Ramos was born on Dec. 7, 1960, in Washington, D.C., to Antonio C. and Georgianna

(Willet) Ramos. He was raised in Maryland and attended St. John's College High School, a military school, where he graduated in 1979. After high school, he graduated from Norwich University, a military college in Northfield, Vermont, with a degree in history in 1984. A commission in the army was offered, but he turned it down because he felt it was not God's will.

During his college years, he became involved in the Newman Club. His spiritual director suggested that he might have a calling to a religious vocation. As he discerned the call, he worked for AAA and the Vermont Lodging and Restaurant Association before he decided to enter the seminary.

He received his Master of Divinity degree at Mount St. Mary's Seminary in Emmitsburg, Maryland. Pursuing a desire to serve in a rural and small-town atmosphere, he applied to the Diocese of Sioux Falls. He finished his priestly formation at St. John's Seminary in Collegeville, Minnesota. The Most Reverend Paul V. Dudley ordained him a priest on Jan. 8, 1994, at St. Therese Catholic Church (now Our Lady of Guadalupe) in Sioux Falls.

Father Ramos served as associate pastor at Holy Family Parish, Mitchell, and chaplain at Sioux Valley Hospital in Sioux Falls. Following these assignments, he served as administrator at Sacred Heart Parish, Chelsea, St. Mary Parish, Zel, and All Saints Parish, Mellette. He then served as pastor at St. Boniface Parish, Idylwilde, St. Christina Parish, Parker, and Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish, Marion.

In 2000, he served as chaplain for those incarcerated in a variety of locations, including Springfield State Prison, Jamison C Unit at the South Dakota State Penitentiary, the Minnehaha County Jail and the Minnehaha Correctional Center until his early retirement due to health reasons in 2018.

Father Ramos was preceded in death by his parents. He is survived by his sister Maria Theresa Cangelosi of Louisiana, his nephews Michael Cangelosi and family and Chase Cangelosi.

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# Sister Bernadette McGowen dies at 89



Sister Bernadette McGowen, OSB, 89, died on Sept. 25, 2023. Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated on Oct. 2 in the Bishop Marty Memorial Chapel. Burial was in the monastery cemetery.

Bernadette Marie was born on June 5, 1934, the seventh child of James and Rose (McGuirk) McGow-

en of Laurel, Nebraska. Of their nine children, only five girls survived infancy. Bernadette and her sisters formed a tight-knit bond, and the family greatly valued their Catholic heritage. Bernadette graduated from Holy Trinity Catholic School in Hartington, Nebraska, and attended Mount Marty College to study math after entering Sacred Heart Monastery.

In June of 1955, she was invested as a novice and received

the name Patricia, which she later changed back to Bernadette. She made her first profession on June 29, 1956, and made her perpetual profession on June 29, 1959.

After her profession, she taught in Richardton, North Dakota, and then at St. Joseph Indian School in Chamberlain, South Dakota. In 1973, she answered a request to minister on the Crow Creek Reservation. The next year, she moved to the Standing Rock Reservation where there was a greater need. Sister Bernadette began many programs during these years, laying a solid foundation.

In 1978, she went back to teaching at Menominee and Atkinson, Nebraska, and Salem, South Dakota. She also worked in the business office at the monastery before she was called to minister to the homeless. She worked at the St. Francis House in Sioux Falls and later managed a shelter in Crookston, Minnesota, for several years. She also ministered in Morton, Minnesota.

Sister Bernadette is survived by her Benedictine Sisters and many nieces and nephews. She is preceded in death by her parents and all her siblings.

## Presentation Sisters

*“Be still, and know that I am God.”  
Psalm 46:10*



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# PEACE

The angel said,  
“Do not be afraid; for behold, I proclaim to you  
good news of great joy that will be for all the people.”

**Luke 2:10**

May your heart experience God’s grace  
and peace this Christmas season.

**Avera**

UPCOMING EVENTS



## Last Collar Standing returns for an epic showdown among priests

While it's sure to be bitter cold outside, nothing will be hotter than the YouTube chat box as 12 priests go head-to-head to fight for the coveted prize of Last Collar Standing on Feb. 4, 2024.

As with past years, the event will be livestreamed on the diocesan YouTube channel where viewers can interact and host watch parties. Emily Leedom and Father Andrew

Thuringer will make their anticipated return as hosts for the competition. Additionally, new games will be introduced alongside popular old ones.

“There’s something to be said about the 12 priests who volunteer their time and bring people from all over the diocese together for one night,” said Hector Bautista, director of mission engagement for the diocese. “People throughout the diocese all tune in at the same time for this event which is a testament to the unifying mission of Set Ablaze.”

The event serves as a fundraiser for Lumen Christi, a ministry of the diocese that sends our missionaries to help form and disciple youth. Lumen Christi has become an indispensable part of keeping our local youth active and engaged in the Church.

“Our Lumen Christi missionaries who travel around the diocese are spreading the Gospel to hundreds of young people,” said Hector. “Last Collar standing generates awareness for these missionaries and encourages them in their work.”

For important updates regarding the event and to find out which priests are participating this year, subscribe to the diocesan social media channels. You can also sign up for email and text updates via Flocknote by texting LASTCOLLAR to 84576.

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**Recitation of the Rosary**

**Friday, Dec. 1** – The Rosary is recited for the faithful departed on the first Friday of the month at 10 a.m. in St. Michael Cemetery in Sioux Falls.

**Men’s Conference**

**Feb. 3** – Men are the key to healthy and holy families. For too many years, the role of fatherhood has been diminished. This conference will help men understand not only their responsibility, but their ability to influence and spiritually lead their families. For more details, go to [www.mission-blueprint.org](http://www.mission-blueprint.org).

**Christmas Concert**

**Dec. 3** – St. Anthony of Padua Parish, Hoven, is holding their 19th Annual Christmas Concert on Sunday at 3 p.m. St. Anthony’s is celebrating 100 years, and in honor of this, unframed church prints (19x23) will be sold at a special price of \$100 each. These prints are from the original 2003 painting by John Green.

**Help for parents who have lost a newborn or pre-born child**

If you’ve lost a child due to miscarriage, still birth or shortly after birth, the Angel Lee Cronen Memorial Fund is available to assist you in dealing with your loss by helping you secure a proper burial for your child. Most parents don’t know what to do when faced with this situation and are often unable to pay for the services involved. This fund exists to help during this difficult time. For more information, contact Deacon Bill Radio at 605-336-7390 or [dcnwilliamradio@sfcatholic.org](mailto:dcnwilliamradio@sfcatholic.org).

**Sacred Heart Monastery**

**Dec. 1** – Online *Lectio Divina* at 10 a.m., Fridays, Dec 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29. Meet online for *Lectio Divina*, a time for praying with the Gospel of the following Sunday. To register any time, contact group leader Sr. Doris Oberembt OSB at [doberembt@yanktonbeneditines.org](mailto:doberembt@yanktonbeneditines.org). Include your email address.

**Dec. 16** – Contemplative Mornings – Usually meeting on the third Saturdays, from 9-11:15 a.m. Contact Sr. Doris at 605-668-6022 or [doberembt@yanktonbeneditines.org](mailto:doberembt@yanktonbeneditines.org). [yanktonbeneditines.org/retreats-contemplative-mornings](http://yanktonbeneditines.org/retreats-contemplative-mornings).

**Silent Personal Retreats** – Reserve space for your silent private or directed individual retreat. Vaccination and boosters required. Contact us at [yanktonbeneditines.org/silent-personal-retreats](http://yanktonbeneditines.org/silent-personal-retreats) or 605-668-6292.

**Spiritual Direction** – Reflect on your experience of God with a companion-guide and intensify your spiritual journey. Scheduling is flexible, typically meeting once a month. Contact us to visit about online or in-person options at [BenedictinePeaceCtr@yanktonbeneditines.org](mailto:BenedictinePeaceCtr@yanktonbeneditines.org) or 605-668-6292.

**The Lourdes Center**

**Holiday Grief Program** – The Lourdes Center is honored to host: *He is Stable* - A Night for Grieving Hearts to Find Rest in His Peace - on Dec. 5 from 6:30-8 p.m. at St. Therese Catholic Church in Sioux Falls. The evening will include presentations from individuals who have experienced grief along with a

beautiful candle lighting ceremony. Christmas cookies and hot chocolate to follow. Children welcome. Register by calling 605-988-3775 or emailing [tlc@sfcatholic.org](mailto:tlc@sfcatholic.org).

**Camp Sydney** – The Lourdes Center will be offering a Grief Camp for youth and their families at Broom Tree Retreat Center, beginning at 6 p.m. June 21, 2024, until 11 a.m. June 23, 2024. This two-day camp will include fun activities, discussion and support. The Grief Camp is offered free of charge. Please register at [thelourdescenter.com](http://thelourdescenter.com). Registration will begin Jan. 15, 2024, at 8 a.m. Call The Lourdes Center at 605-988-3775 for more information.

**Mater Ecclesiae Monastery**

**Public Eucharistic Adoration:** All are welcome for eucharistic adoration and prayer before the Blessed Sacrament in the monastery chapel. Monday-Saturday, 7 a.m.-6 p.m.

**Daily Holy Mass:** Monday-Saturday, 7 a.m.

**Prayer Requests:** It is our pleasure to support you in prayer. Please contact us with your requests. Phone: 605-336-2374 Website: [www.perpetualadorationsisters.org](http://www.perpetualadorationsisters.org)

**Gift Shop:** We invite you to visit our religious gift shop at the Mater Ecclesiae Monastery just behind the Cathedral of Saint Joseph. Monday-Saturday, 9:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.

**Is the Lord calling you to support our mission?** Please visit our website, [www.perpetualadorationsisters.org](http://www.perpetualadorationsisters.org), for more information.

27<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL *The Cathedral of Saint Joseph's*  
**Christmas**  
*at the Cathedral.*

*"The Heaven's Declare!"*

BENEFITING

Bishop Dudley Hospitality House &  
Cathedral of St. Joseph

DECEMBER  
14-17, 2023  
CATHEDRAL OF SAINT JOSEPH



FOR MORE INFORMATION  
[www.ccfesd.org](http://www.ccfesd.org)  
(605) 988-3765

THE BISHOP'S  
**BULLETIN**



**Catholic Diocese of Sioux Falls**  
523 N. Duluth Avenue  
Sioux Falls, SD 57104-2714



*Merry Christmas*

Scan the QR  
code to read  
the full story  
on the Best  
Gift Ever



*"Mom, guess what I got today?"*  
He doesn't pause for me to guess.

*"I got a present! And it's the best present in the whole world!"*