

Second Week of Advent

Monday – December 6 – St. Nicholas, Bishop

Readings: Isaiah 35:1-10 – Peace Prosperity; Luke 5:17-26 – Healed

Reality: “I have always thought of Christmas time, when it has come round...as a good time: a kind, forgiving, charitable, pleasant time; the only time I know of, in the long calendar of the year, when we open our hearts freely. Though it has never put a scrap of gold or silver in my pocket, I believe that it has done me good, and will do me good. I say, ‘God bless it.’” (Charles Dickens)

Response: Do a favor for a neighbor without the person knowing it.

Tuesday -December 7– Memorial of St. Ambrose.

Readings: Isaiah 40:1-11 -Hope in the Lord; Matthew 18:12-14– Weary.

Reality: Christmas eve was a hectic time. Dad and mom appeared to be distracted with bundles and burdens that had accumulated over the course of the final week before Christmas. Their little daughter seemed to be in the way wherever she was. Finally, she was hustled off to bed. As she knelt to pray, she said, “Forgive us our Christmases, as we forgive those who Christmas against us.”

Response: Pray the Our Father, meditating on each of the words until you have found some spiritual calm during the day.

Wednesday -December 8 – Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Readings: Genesis 3:9-15, 20 – caught in the act; Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12 – spiritual blessings; Luke 1:26-38 - Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you.

Reality: A salt doll journeyed for thousands of miles over land until it finally came to the sea of grace. It was fascinated by this strange moving grace-full mass, quite unlike the doll had ever experienced. “Who are you?” said the salt doll to the sea. The grace-full sea replied, “Come in and see.” The doll waded into the sea. The further the doll walked in the sea, the more the doll dissolved until there was little left of the doll. Before the last bit dissolved, the salt doll exclaimed in wonder, “Now I know who I am—let it be according to your will.”

Response: Pray the rosary – the joyful mysteries.

Thursday -December 9- St. Juan Cuauhtlatoatzin

Readings: Isaiah 41:13-20 – Saving God; Matthew 11:1-15 – None Greater.

Reality: An aged pioneer traveled westward across the great plains until he came to an abrupt halt at the edge of the Grand Canyon. He gazed at the sight before him: a vast chasm one mile down, eighteen miles across, and more than one hundred miles long. He gasped, “Something must have happened here – the hand of the Lord has created this!”

A visitor to our world at Christmas time, seeing the lights, the decorations, the music, the decorated trees, the parades, the nativity scene, and the religious services might also say, “Something must have happened here --- yes, it is the hand of the Lord.”

Response: Be thankful for the many blessings you have received.

Friday-December 10 – Our Lady of Loreto

Readings: Isaiah 48:17-19 – Messianic powers; Matthew 11:16-19 – Unruly lot.

Reality: A family of four drives to a mall for some Christmas shopping. They decide to shop separately so that the presents they purchase for each other might be kept secret. Before they departed, the father says, “Let’s synchronize our phones and agree to meet in the parking lot at five pm sharp.” The four synchronized time, then the mother turns to the father and says, “Now, let us synchronize our wallets.” Yes, “Time will prove where the wisdom (of the Incarnation) lies.”

Response: Remember the reason for the season.

Saturday-December 11 – St. Damasus 1, Pope.

Readings: Sirach 48:1-4, 9-11 – prophet on fire; Mt. 17:9a, 10-13 – death, where is your sting?

Reality: An artist went to visit a friend. When she arrived, she was weeping. When asked why, she showed him a handkerchief of exquisite beauty which had great sentimental value, but which had been ruined by a drop of indelible ink. The artist asked her to let him have the handkerchief, which he returned to her several days later. When she opened the package she could hardly believe her eyes. The artist, using the inkblot as a base, had drawn a design of great beauty with Indian ink. Now, it was more beautiful than ever.

Response: “God is hiding in the world. Our task is to let the divine emerge from our deeds.” (Rabbi Abraham Heschel).

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