



The Journey to Bethlehem

Today, we light the Second Candle of Advent, which is also known as the Bethlehem Candle. This candle symbolises Faith and Love, and also recalls the preparations Mary and Joseph made for Jesus' birth.

While they were getting ready for Jesus' birth, they were interrupted by a Roman census to be taken of the entire Roman world. Everyone had to go to their own town to register. St Luke writes: *"Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David."* (Luke 2: 1-7). Joseph brought Mary with him, and from their point of view, the 90-mile (or, 145 km) journey was surely an inconvenience. Mary was nearing the end of her pregnancy, and they would have preferred to stay at Nazareth, rather than spend the better part of a week traveling from Nazareth to Bethlehem. But, that's not how God saw it.

About 800 years earlier, God had spoken to His people through the Prophet Micah: *"But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, though you are small among the clans of Judah, out of you will come for me one who will be ruler over Israel, whose origins are from of old, from ancient times."* (Micah 5:2)

The amazing thing is that when the time was right, God's plan of Salvation fell into place and in total fulfillment of the ancient prophecy as to where the Promised Messiah was to be born. Joseph and Mary lived in

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Nazareth, but God wanted Jesus to be born in Bethlehem. So God used a Roman emperor to decree a census to accomplish His purposes; and Jesus was born where God had promised.

For many of us, the weeks leading up to Christmas and the New Year are among the busiest of the year. We do not appreciate interruptions to our plans at any time, and we especially hate interruptions when we are at our busiest. But, sometimes God interrupts our plans in order to accomplish His purposes. It may not be convenient, and sometimes, it may be downright, uncomfortable. So, as we get ready for Christmas and the New Year, let us not get so wrapped up in our own preparations that we are too busy to appreciate what God is doing in our lives and in the lives of those around us. Is God interrupting my plans because he wants me to do something else, or to do something for someone else?

The Second Candle of Advent reminds me that Christmas is the celebration of our faith in Jesus the Christ. Christmas is also about Love. So, my plans for this Christmas is to celebrate my love for God and for the people around me.

"Do not be afraid; for see - I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord." (Luke 2:10-11)

This Advent Reflection is adapted from a blog at <http://www.clayporr.com/bethlehem-candle/>

Reflection by Ros

Novena notes



2nd Sunday of Advent
 Year A
 8 December 2019

Readings & Responses for the Week

Sun, 8 December	Is 11:1-10; Rom 15:4-9; Mt 3:1-12 In his days justice shall flourish and peace till the moon fails.
Mon, 9 December Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary	Gen 3:9-15,20; Eph 1:3-6,11-12; Lk 1:26-38 Sing a new song to the Lord for he has worked wonders.
Tue, 10 December	Is 40:1-11; Mt 18:12-14 Here is our God coming with power.
Wed, 11 December St. Damasus I	Is 40:25-31; Mt 11:28-30 My soul, give thanks to the Lord.
Thu, 12 December Our Lady of Guadalupe	Is 41:13-20; Mt 11:11-15 The Lord is kind and full of compassion, slow to anger, abounding in love.
Fri, 13 December St. Lucy	Is 48:17-19; Mt 11:16-19 Anyone who follows you, Lord, will have the light of life.
Sat, 14 December St. John of the Cross	Sir 49:1-4,9-11; Mt 17:10-13 God of hosts, bring us back; let your face shine on us and we shall be saved.

WEEKDAY MASS (MON - FRI)
 Time: 6.30am, 12.15pm, 6.30pm
 Confession: Half an hour before Mass

SUNSET MASS (SAT)
 Time: 6.30pm

Time: 8am, 10am, 12noon*, 5.30pm
 *2nd & 4th Sunday - Mass in Tagalog, subject to the availability of priests.

PUBLIC HOLIDAY
 Time: 8am, 6.30pm

SATURDAY MORNING MASS
 Time: 7am

SATURDAY NOVENA DEVOTION
 English: 8am, 9.30am, 11am, 1pm, 4pm, 5.30pm
 Mandarin: 2.30pm
 Confession: After every Novena Service except after the 11am service.

DAYS OF OBLIGATION
 Time: 7pm (Eve of Day of Obligation)
 6.30am, 12.15pm, 7pm

Novena notes

Feast of Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, 9 December

In 1854, Pope Pius IX's solemn declaration, *Ineffabilis Deus* clarified with finality the long-held belief of the Church that Mary was conceived free from original sin. In proclaiming the Immaculate Conception of Mary as a dogma of the Church, the pope expressed precisely and clearly that Mary was conceived free from the stain of original sin. This privilege of Mary derives from God having chosen her as Mother of the Savior; thus she received the graces of salvation in Christ from the very moment of her conception.



This great gift to Mary, an ordinary human being just like us, was fitting because she was destined to be Mother of God. The purity and holiness of the Blessed Virgin Mary is a model for all Christians.

Advent Prayer Reflection and Musical Presentation

NOVENA
CHURCH OF ST ALPHONSUS

5 ADVENT FIGURES
AN ADVENT PRAYER REFLECTION
Risen Christ Youth Symphony
conducted by Dr. Aloysius Leong
DATE : 10th Dec 2019
TIME : 8.00pm - 9.30pm

CHRISTMAS THROUGH THE AGES
A Musical presentation by
Boni De Souza & Friends
DATE : 20th Dec 2019
TIME : 8.00pm - 9.30pm

All happening at Novena Church.
Free Admission.
A love offering would be greatly appreciated.

Advent Novena

We are in the 7th week of the Advent Novena and this year theme is, "The Birth of Jesus". All are welcome. Bring along your family and friends.

7 Dec: Jesus and His Family

14 Dec: Jesus - Saviour, The Light of the World

21 Dec: Jesus - The King

Advent Penitential Services for City District at 8pm

9th December - Church of Sts. Peter and Paul

10th December - Church of the Sacred Heart

11th December - Church of St Michael
12th December - Church of St Bernadette

13th December - Church of St. Teresa
16th December - Church of St Alphonsus (Novena Church)

17th December - Church of the Our Lady of Lourdes

15th December, Simbang Gabi Mass

There will be a Simbang Gabi Mass organized by the Novena Filipino Community on 15th December at 8pm in the Main Church. All are welcome.

Advent Chinese Musical Play

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祂, 等你回来!

圣雅丰索堂, 音乐话剧
CHURCH OF ST ALPHONSUS, A CHINESE MUSICAL PLAY

日期: 12月13日 (星期五)
13 Dec 2019 (Fri)
时间: 晚上 7.30pm
地点: Novena Church

入场免费, 爱心奉献
赠送限量精美纪念品
FREE ADMISSION/LOVE OFFERING
LIMITED SOUVENIRS

董事演出
李明发神父
FR EUGENE LEE C.Ss.R.
黄财龙神父
FR TERENCE WEE C.Ss.R.
罗彬神父
FR ROBIN LOMANSKOC C.Ss.R.

We will be organizing a Chinese Musical on the theme : Homecoming Pilgrims @ Novena (He is waiting for you) It will be held in Novena Church on 13th December 2019 at 7.30pm and admission is free. All are welcome!