

Encountering THE SEASON

Advent for the Family

Third Sunday of Advent (C)

Zephaniah 3:14-18a

Philippians 4:4-7

Luke 3:10-18

Dear Family:

Read the reflection about giving our problems to God and discuss the “Ponder and Pray” questions and prompts, thinking about how Our Lord is calling you to act. Then consider the challenges of the “Live It” section, have fun with the family activities, and dive into the *visio divina* prayer exercise.

Attend to God or Power Through?

This week, we continue the theme we began last week about trusting God with our vulnerability. Depending on the season we are in, it can be easier or more difficult to trust God. When we're fatigued, at odds with a friend or family member, or struggling physically or emotionally, trusting God can feel like an extra weight.

It seems simpler to power through and attend to God when we have the time and energy. But it is precisely in these moments that we need to trust God the most. When we're feeling vulnerable, out of control, or lost, that is when God wants to hold us close and keep us safe.

If, in these days of preparation for the coming of Our Lord, you find yourself in a place you'd rather not be, tell that to God, knowing in your heart that he understands that your circumstances affect your openness and eagerness to trust. While knowing all of that, he awaits you with open arms, ready to embrace you with his peace.

“ Behold, God is my salvation;
I will trust, and will not be afraid;
for the Lord God is my strength and my song,
and he has become my salvation. ”

—Isaiah 12:2



Joseph's Prayer by Mike Moyers

To read more about trusting God in the midst of our fear this week, see Rejoice! An Advent Pilgrimage into the Heart of Scripture, Year C.

Ponder and Pray

- What circumstances in your life are preventing you from fully trusting God?
- How can you allow God to enter all the seasons of your life?
- Are you looking forward to any events in the next couple of weeks? How can you invite God into that joy?

Live It

In prayer, ask God who in your life is struggling right now and how you can help them. Make a special effort this week to do a “random act of kindness” for them, perhaps making them dinner one night, stopping by with their favorite coffee, or asking if there are any errands to run or tasks to complete that you can do for them in this busy season. Imagine if everyone in the parish took on this challenge. What a fruitful week this would be! Through you and your witness, someone’s trust in the Lord might be restored.

Visio Divina

Take a few moments to study this week’s image of Joseph, the foster father of Jesus. Ponder what the image is communicating beyond the parts of the painting. Then prayerfully read the questions, asking God to illuminate your mind to all he wishes to say to you through this image.

Question 1:

What is the first thing you notice about this image?

Question 2:

What do you think Joseph is praying about in this third week before his son is to be born?

Question 3:

Using your imagination, what else fills the room? Is anyone with Joseph at this moment?

Fun For the Family

(From *Rejoice! An Advent Pilgrimage into the Heart of Scripture, Year C*)

Christmas is coming! This would be a great time to get some baking done. Baking teaches us patience because we have to carefully prepare and measure the ingredients, put the right things together at the right time, and wait for the creation to come to life in the oven without disturbing it. Find a fun recipe and bake it with your family.

For free videos and downloadable resources featuring *Rejoice! An Advent Pilgrimage into the Heart of Scripture, Year C* with Fr. Mark Toups, scan this code with your camera.

