

Encountering THE SEASON

Advent for the Family

Second Sunday of Advent (C)

Baruch 5:1-9
Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11
Luke 3:1-6

Dear Family:

Read the reflection about being vulnerable 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.

Do You Fear Being Vulnerable?

Trusting God with anything in our lives involves being vulnerable. Putting our hearts at risk in any way is frightening. We fear the pain, rejection, and loss that we’ve experienced while being completely open with others in the past. We think, *Why would being vulnerable with God be any different?*

God knows intimately about rejection while being unprotected. Jesus gave everything, and we walked away from him when he was in the most pain, when he was defenseless. We turned our backs on Our Lord when he needed us to extend our hands to him in mercy.

The heart of God knows what it is to be afraid in the face of vulnerability, and yet, that is what he calls us to. He tells us to follow in his footsteps because he knows that being totally open is the only path to authenticity, to real love, to real expression of who he created us to be.

“ Do not fear, O Zion;
let not your hands grow weak.
The Lord your God is in your midst! ”
—Zephaniah 3:16-17



Mothers of Miracle by Mike Moyers

God never shies away from asking big things of us, as in the way he asked Mary to be the Mother of God, the way he beckoned Joseph to be the father on earth to a divine Son, and the way he called Elizabeth to motherhood in

her senior years. In all these crucial moments, he greets his people with “Fear not!” God is with us. The promise of Advent is that he will come to us and stay forever. Can you step forward in faith, allowing God to enter your heart?

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 comes into your heart and mind when God or his messenger says, “Fear not” in Scripture? Before delivering messages, God often says, “Fear not.” Why?
- What is God asking of you that fills you with fear? Can you be gut-level honest with God and tell him how his request scares you?
- Continuing the practice we started last week, pray the Surrender Prayer ten times: “O Jesus, I surrender myself to you; take care of everything!”

Live It

This week, look for times that God calls you to be vulnerable with those around you. Maybe it’s sharing a story, standing up for someone, or being honest about how something makes you feel. This openness leads to authenticity, which God desires for all of us. In your prayerful moments throughout the week, relate any fears, discomfort, or hopes to God.

Visio Divina

Engage your mind and heart as you study the image in this bulletin for a few moments. Beyond illustrating a snapshot of Mary and Elizabeth’s encounter, what does the art communicate? Think of an answer and then prayerfully read the questions, asking God to fill you with all that he wishes to say to you through this work.

Question 1:

What strikes you first about this image?

Question 2:

How does the light and motion make you feel?

Question 3:

What do Mary and Elizabeth’s postures reveal about vulnerability?



Fun For the Family

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

God gave us the gifts of knowledge and thought. He wants us to use those gifts to relate and share with one another. He doesn’t want us to be stuck in our heads and anxious about our thoughts. This week, play a board game with your family. Pick a game that involves guessing what another person is thinking, like Catch Phrase, Cranium, Charades, or Twenty Questions!

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.

