

To my Sisters and Brothers in Christ;

A blessed Advent to you and yours.

This season of Advent is a season, of anticipation, of waiting and of preparation. Waiting not just for the Christ child in the manger but also for the Second Coming when all things will be made new. Culturally it is typically a hectic and hurried time. I'm hoping that you and your loved ones will find some time, to slow down and wait in grace for what is to come.

I love this Christmas poem by Madeleine L'Engle. It is a perfect one to reflect on as we continue our walk either through Advent or through the 12 days of Christmas and prepare our hearts for the new year.

First Coming

By Madeleine L'Engle

*He did not wait till the world was ready,
till men and nations were at peace
He came when the Heavens were unsteady
and prisoners cried out for release.
He did not wait for the perfect time.
He came when the need was deep and great.
He dined with sinners in all their grime,
turned water into wine. He did not wait
till hearts were pure. In joy he came
to a tarnished world of sin and doubt.
To a world like ours, of anguished shame
He came, and his Light would not go out.
He came to a world which did not mesh,
to heal its tangles, shield its scorn.
In the mystery of the Word made Flesh
the Maker of the stars was born.
We cannot wait till the world is sane
to raise our songs with joyful voice,
for to share our grief, to touch our pain,
He came with Love: Rejoice! Rejoice!*

And now on to some business-

I feel like a broken record sometimes – as I write, once again, our Covid 19 issues are still with us. We have better vaccination rates, and children can now get vaccinated. But Cayuga County and the surrounding counties are still struggling with high infection rates. I pray that we can all be vigilant regard vaccines, including boosters and with mask wearing. My prayer is that things improve sooner than later.

After I announced the Christmas Eve Service at 7PM, I heard loud and clear about the displeasure with that time, so we've moved the service to 9PM. Hopefully that will take care of some of the issues with the previous time.

And...it would be great (if you haven't already) to get your pledge cards in, so that the hard-working people that put the budget together can go ahead with that work.

Again, I wish you and yours a Blessed Advent and the following Christmas Season.

Grace and Peace,

John +

Father John ☩

A short article by the great Franciscan Priest, writer and speaker, Fr. Richard Rohr

Incarnation

[Celebrating an Eternal Advent](#)

Tuesday, December 24, 2019

In the first 1200 years of Christianity, the greatest feast was Easter with the high holy days of Holy Week leading up to the celebration of the resurrection of Christ. But in the 13th century, a new person entered the scene: Francis of Assisi felt we didn't need to wait for God to love us through the cross and resurrection. Francis intuited that the whole thing started with incarnate love, and he popularized what we now take for granted as Christmas, which for many became the greater Christian feast. The Franciscans popularized Christmas. Maybe their intuition was correct.

Francis realized that if God had become flesh—taken on materiality, physicality, humanity—then we didn't have to wait for Good Friday and Easter to “solve the problem” of human sin; the problem was solved from the beginning. It makes sense that Christmas became the great celebratory feast of Christians because it basically says that it's good to be human, it's good to be on this earth, it's good to be flesh, it's good to have emotions. We don't need to be ashamed of any of this. God loves matter and physicality.

With that insight, it's no wonder Francis went wild over Christmas! (I do, too: my little house is filled with candles at Christmastime.) Francis believed that every tree should be decorated with lights to show their true status as God's creations! And that's exactly what we still do 800 years later.

Remember, when we speak of Advent or preparing for Christmas, we're not just talking about waiting for the little baby Jesus to be born. That already happened 2,000 years ago. In fact, we're welcoming the Universal Christ, the Cosmic Christ, the Christ that is forever being born in the human soul and into history.

And believe me, we do have to make room, because right now there is no room in the inn for such a mystery. We see things pretty much in their materiality, but we don't see the light shining through. We don't see the incarnate spirit that is hidden inside of everything material.

The early Eastern Church, which too few people in the United States and Western Europe are familiar with, made it very clear that *the incarnation was a universal principle*. Incarnation meant not just that God became Jesus; God said yes to the material universe. God said yes to physicality. Eastern Christianity understands the mystery of incarnation in the universal sense. So it is always Advent. God is forever coming into the world (see John 1:9).

We're always waiting to see spirit revealing itself through matter. We're always waiting for matter to become a new form in which spirit is revealed. Whenever that happens, we're celebrating Christmas. The gifts of incarnation just keep coming. Perhaps this is *enlightenment*.

Reference:

Adapted from "An Advent Meditation with Richard Rohr" (Center for Action and Contemplation: 2017), <https://vimeo.com/246331333>.

ON-LINE WORSHIP

Sundays - 9am Worship Service

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/97774056978?pwd=ZytJSVZjWmt3MUdSMkl3U1JaaGNLZz09>

Meeting ID: 982 7706 2680

Passcode: 435902

Dial by your location

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Other Zoom Worship Schedule and Numbers

Tuesdays – 10am Bible Study

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/94333886777?pwd=WnNKsncyQkkzSlg0Yjc3ZGIVbk1PQT09>

Meeting ID: 943 3388 6777

Passcode: 577455

Dial by your location

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Wednesdays – 12pm Worship Service

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/95528786615?pwd=Z01DVGdvcG5XeVBIUVRMKzFFVVBjZz09>

Meeting ID: 955 2878 6615

Passcode: 634665

Dial by your location

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Thursdays – 10am Coffee and Conversation

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/97366952412?pwd=WUtQVFMyWlFKWmRBT1UyTHQ2Rm5Rdz09>

Meeting ID: 973 6695 2412

Passcode: 120228

Dial by your location

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Monday – Tuesday – Wednesday – Thursday – Friday

MORNING PRAYER – RITE II

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/john.rohde.16/>

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/92662278952>

Meeting ID: 926 6227 8952

Dial by your location

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 926 6227 8952

Find your local number: <https://zoom.us/u/ac4XCk34Dn>

ADDITIONAL SERVICES



Father John will be doing a Longest Night service on Tuesday, December 21, 2021 at 7:00 pm. He and his wife, and some of their friends, will be supplying the music.



Our Christmas Eve service will be on Friday, December 24, 2021 at 9:00 pm.

Father John will be doing Morning Prayer on Christmas Day at 8:30 am via Facebook and Zoom.

Vestry Voice

The November Vestry meeting began with an opening devotional. The October minutes and financials were approved.

It was determined that a church credit card would not be a good idea since it would need to be in an individual's name.

We were told by the auditor that the audit paperwork has been sent but it has not been received as of this date. Terry Beyor will contact them again.

We have received an estimate on the plaster work and painting needed in the tower room of \$7,000 and an estimate on the stairway going downstairs of \$3,000. Bill Abdallah will look into grants to help pay for this work.

The plaque for John McLane is in the parish office. Bill Abdallah will reach out to Kathy McLane, John's wife, about when they would like to do the unveiling.

We are waiting to hear from the diocese about our grant proposal for equipment to do live streaming of our worship services. Until then we are on hold.

A Mutual Ministry Review is not required by the diocese. If we did this, it would be after the annual meeting when the new vestry is in place, at the vestry retreat.

It was brought up that our staff is getting older and we need to have a plan in place in case someone gets injured or ill and will be out for an extended time. This is not something that can be corrected right away but something that needs to be addressed for the future.

It was decided that we would not be doing Christmas Baskets this year. We do not have someone to coordinate and oversee this project, drivers to deliver the baskets and volunteers to pack them. Instead, we will be donating gift cards and toiletries to the soup kitchen so they can hand them out.

Carole Greene would like to set up a children's book corner where she could read to the children that come to the soup kitchen. According to Covid protocol this cannot happen at this time.

The meeting closed with compline. Next Vestry meeting December 13, 2021.

Fundraising

We are looking for new ideas for fundraisers. If you have an idea, please speak to a vestry member or Father John. We are continuing to accept sneakers for our latest fundraiser.

Volunteers Needed

Since the Soup Kitchen has gone to 4 days a week, they are in need of volunteers. The Soup Kitchen now operates Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Saturday serving from 11:30 am to 12:30 pm. If you are interested in volunteering, please contact the church office at 315-252-5721.



Syracuse Brass Concert

December 5, 2021

3:00 pm

SOUP KITCHEN

Instead of doing Christmas Baskets this year, we are asking for gift cards and toiletries. We will collect these and they will be distributed to the people who come to the soup kitchen.

David Ward is requesting hams be donated to the soup kitchen for their Christmas meal. They can be dropped off at the parish house any Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday from 10:00 to Noon.

Pledge Cards

Pledge cards have been mailed out. Please return these as soon as you can. We use this information to prepare our budget for next year.

Wreaths Across America December 18, 2021



REMEMBER

our fallen U.S. veterans.

HONOR

those who serve.

TEACH

your children the value of freedom.