

# Waiting in Hope

An Advent bulletin for the home  
Week Three: 13 December 2020

## Rejoice Sunday & Bambinelli



The Third Sunday of Advent is traditionally referred to as Gaudete or Rejoice Sunday. The rose coloured candle we light this day represents this joy, which is echoed in the Entrance Antiphon of the Mass: 'Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice. Indeed, the Lord is near.'

St John Paul II, when Pope, began a tradition in Rome that has been continued by Pope Benedict and Pope Francis on this Sunday, now also known affectionally as **Bambinelli Sunday**. Bambinelli is the Italian for Baby Jesus. On this day children and their families from across Rome come to St Peter's Square, bringing with them the figure of the infant Jesus from their crib. After the Angelus, the children raise up the figures and the Pope blesses them.

In Advent 2019 Pope Francis once more encouraged families to have a nativity scene or crib in the home. He said that it '*... helps us to relive the history of what took place in Bethlehem. When, at Christmas, we place the statue of the Infant Jesus in the manger, the nativity scene suddenly comes alive. God appears as a child, for us to take into our arms. Beneath weakness and frailty, he conceals his power that creates and transforms all things.*'

## Suggestion for the home

Assemble a crib for your home with hay and the animal figurines. As we get closer to Christmas, add the shepherds, Joseph and Mary, leaving the three wise men at a distance from the crib until January 6<sup>th</sup>. The figure of baby Jesus, that may have been blessed at Mass, can be gift wrapped and opened as the first gift of Christmas before finally placing the Jesus figure in the crib.

## Linking with your Parish: CHRISTMAS MASSES - YOUR PARISH NEEDS YOU!

As parishes get ready to celebrate Christmas, this year more than ever help will be needed. Essential services such as stewarding, cleaning of the church, liturgical ministries and more all need volunteers – people from the parish - if we are to safely and joyfully celebrate our Christmas liturgies.

## An Advent Tradition The Nativity Scene

In about 1223 AD St Francis wanted to celebrate the feast of Christmas in a new way, helping people to recall the humble surroundings in which Jesus was born (his nativity). In the town of Greccio, near Assisi, with the help of a local landowner he set up a live crib with stable, hay and animals. The local people came at night with torches and candles to celebrate Mass and, on seeing the scene, to be reminded of God's love for us in sending his only son to be born in the poverty of a manger. St. Francis' initiative at Greccio popularized the making of a Christmas crib in our homes, churches, hospitals, schools and other places.



## A Blessing Prayer by the Family Crib

God of all people,  
from the very beginning of creation  
you have shown us your love:  
when our need for a Saviour was great  
you sent your Son  
to be born of the Virgin Mary.  
To our lives He brings joy and peace,  
justice, mercy, and love.  
Lord, bless our family and all who will look  
upon this crib in the coming days;  
may it remind us of the humble birth of  
Jesus, and lift our thoughts to Him,  
who is God-with-us, our Emmanuel and  
the Saviour of all. Amen.



## Weekly Advent Gospel Link

The figure of John the Baptist once more takes centre stage in our Gospel reading, though this time the account comes from John 1:6-8,19-28, rather than Mark's gospel. While he may be centre stage, John is once more pointing firmly to Christ as our saviour. In this passage he highlights an important Advent theme: *Jesus has already come into the world as our saviour.*

During Advent, we pray that we will be able to recognize Jesus' presence in our midst and to follow the example of John the Baptist by pointing others to the good news of Jesus. *How am I in my words and actions spreading the Advent message of hope in Jesus? What acts of kindness, patience and generosity can I share with others as I prepare for Christmas?*

Advent also reminds us that Jesus will come again to fulfill the promise of salvation. We pray that we will continue to be watchful as we anticipate that great day.

*See [kandle.ie](http://kandle.ie) for weekly Scripture reflections on the Advent Sunday readings by Fr Liam Lawton*

## An Advent hymn to think about... O Come, Divine Messiah



The composer of this Advent carol was Simon-Joseph Pellegrin (1663 – 1745). He was a French poet and playwright. The translation of this song from its original French, *Venez, divin Messie*, into English was done by Sister Mary of St. Philip. She was one of the first English members of the Sisters of Notre Dame when they established a training college in Liverpool, England around 1850.

While there is a strong sense of petition in this hymn, it's musical setting conveys an overriding confidence in God.

Drawing on texts from Matthew, Luke, Isaiah and Psalm 62,

the hymn proclaims that our Saviour will come - in peace and in meekness, in human weakness, dispelling the darkness and sadness of this world as hope sings its triumph.



You can listen to this hymn on the following link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dzNiBdW4Le4>

## Remembering those in need

In the Advent season we are especially called to support those in need as much as we can. There are many charities that need our assistance at this time, including **St Vincent de Paul, Trócaire, Focus Ireland, the Peter McVerry Trust, Pieta House, the Simon Community** to name a few. Please give what you can at this time.

**A SPECIAL INVITATION:** This year the Cathedral parish invites parishioners from across the whole diocese to join in a livestreamed service of carols, readings and prayers led by Bishop Denis from Carlow Cathedral. While many of us will miss our traditional carol services, this promises to be a very special moment of shared hope, joy and song as we approach Christmas. *Please go to [iCatholic.ie](http://iCatholic.ie) for livestream.*



## An Advent Family Prayer at Bedtime for week 3

*You might like to light three candles on your Advent wreath or Advent Candle to begin your prayer*

Loving God,

On this Advent night we turn to you in prayer. As we prepare to celebrate the birth of your Son, we ask your blessing on each of us.

Open our hearts to the good news that you bring to us and help us to welcome your light into our lives, a light that gives us the gift of joy in the Lord.

May we see that our deepest joy comes from knowing you.

May this joy fill our hearts, our minds and our home.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Together we pray: **Come, Lord Jesus.**

