



# MEDITATIVE MUSINGS

December 2024 | Louisiana State Knights of Columbus Chaplain's Newsletter

## *The Fraternal Cornerstone*

Many people treat the day after Thanksgiving – Black Friday – as one of the holiest days of the year. All one needs to do is open the newspaper to see consumerism go rampant. The TRUE meaning of the season, though, is to prepare our hearts and minds to receive Christ, the King of Universe. Traditional programs offered by the Knights of Columbus, like the *Keep Christ in Christmas* campaign, help us help others to shift their focus from materialism to a spirit of giving. During these four busy weeks of Advent, how will you evangelize and show others the light of Christ?

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### PG. 3

**Knight's Connection**

## Chaplain's Spiritual Message

Dear Brother Knights:

It's Advent again! Purple decorations. Dusting the wreath off. Familiar hymns. Salvation Army bell ringers at the store. Counting the days to Christmas. Black Friday shopping. Here we go again. It's one big do-over! But even though it might seem monotonous and routine, perhaps that's the message of the Gospel throughout Advent; we need a do-over to shock us back into sync spiritually!

What is Advent all about? Well, it's about anticipation, promise and prayer. I grew up in Louisiana of course, and even though this is silly, right after Thanksgiving, every morning I would open my curtain and peer out looking for one thing – snow! I was always anticipating and expecting it. And if I didn't get it one year, you better believe I did it over the next. Prayed harder and waited longer. This is the stuff of Advent's liturgical readings. Jeremiah and Paul's hopes were high and electric.

**“God has promised redemption. Do you believe that? If you don't, that's probably why Advent is good for you!”**

But they were also full of apprehension as well. They lived in ages of turmoil and threat. Jeremiah was familiar with cold exile and utter loss. Paul wrote to a community besieged by apocalyptic change. There was much to fear too while anticipating.

I remember Christmas shopping once in an enormous department store. A mom was there with her four-year-old. The four-year-old was interested in the fur coats and how they felt. And before you know it, mom was too busy looking at the bargains on the other side of the world – a clothing table away. When the girl looked around, her mom was gone. Her face became red, and she started sobbing and crying. Out of nowhere, mom swooped in to cradle the girl and transformed her shrieks into tears of relief and joy.

I know the temptation is there to say, “Why are we doing this all over again? Why celebrate this whole liturgical cycle?” When I taught religion in high school, I would introduce a topic and automatically some student would complain “We did that in Grade School!”

The implication was, of course, that they thought they knew all there was to know about the topic. We might be tempted to think the same things as we begin to retell the story of the Gospel. Been there; done that; we heard it all last year.

But we're not the same people, are we? Perhaps that's why we need the do-over. We've grown older; we've had new experiences and made new friends. We see things differently this year than last year. The Gospel doesn't change for sure; but we do!

Yes, we find ourselves at another Advent. It's a season of promise sandwiched between the reasons we are afraid. Life doesn't get any better. It's still the same. The world struggles on. Suffering continues. But God has promised redemption. Do you believe that? If you don't, that's probably why Advent is good for you – to perfect your art of the do-over!

~Fr. Jamin



## ***Gospel for Reflection: Luke 21: 25-28, 34-36***

Jesus said to his disciples: “There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on earth nations will be in dismay, perplexed by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will die of fright in anticipation of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. But when these signs begin to happen, stand erect and raise your heads because your redemption is at hand. “Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy from carousing and drunkenness and the anxieties of daily life, and that day catch you by surprise like a trap. For that day will assault everyone who lives on the face of the earth. Be vigilant at all times and pray that you have the strength to escape the tribulations that are imminent and to stand before the Son of Man.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

### ***Knight's Connection***

Did you know that December 12 is the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe? Nearly 500 years later, Our Lady's message continues to inspire hope in the Americas. When she appeared to Juan Diego, many were drifting away from God and his life-giving law. In the context of so much upheaval, God's mother was sent to draw men together again to the once source of hope and life made present in the incarnate Son of God.

The Knights' Silver Rose Program advances the message of Our Lady of Guadalupe while praying for unification, spiritual renewal, and hope.

Is your Council participating in the Silver Rose Program? Or do you have other ways you plan on celebrating Our Lady. Find other ways here:

<https://www.kofc.org/en/news-room/our-lady-of-guadalupe/index.html>

In his audience for the First Sunday of Advent in 2022, Pope Francis reminded the faithful, ““We must be awake, alert, vigilant. Jesus warns us: there is the danger of not realizing His coming and being unprepared for His visit. I have recalled on other occasions what Saint Augustine said: ‘I fear the Lord who passes by’... that is, I fear that He will pass by and I will not recognize Him!” As the Pope reminds us, Advent is a time that we can be “shaken up from our lethargy” and ask how we are present to God and to others in our everyday activities. What are the concrete realities that have already distracted us during this Advent season? Or are we distracted waiting for some large signs that we fail to see the manifestations of the coming of Christ right now in our midst? How will the Lord visit you this Advent season? Are you ready to meet him when he comes?”



**READ** the Scripture Reading on page three of this newsletter.



**SHARE** the reflection of the State Chaplain with your Council in the absence of your Chaplain!



**REFLECT** on how you might put this spiritual message into practice in your Council.