



Grand Knight's Message

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Brothers, Families and Friends,

December 2018

Happy New Liturgical Year! And welcome to the Month of The Immaculate Conception, the Season of Advent and soon the Season of Christmas.

Advent is a wonderful time of the year leading us into the Christmas Season and a New Year. This time of year can be a wonderful time of preparing ourselves for Christ in the manger and Christ at the end of time. All too often, we step out of Church after one of the Sundays of Advent and get wrapped up (pun intended!) in holiday parties, gift shopping, holiday decorating, and gift wrapping all while trying to live our everyday lives of work, home, kids' events, and Church events. We can tend to forget the "Reason for the Season" amidst our busy schedules, and the true purpose of Advent – to give ourselves time to pray and prepare to acknowledge Christ's incarnation, the overwhelmingly miraculous gift that God is with us, as one of us.

While we hopefully take moments during the busyness to stop and pray, to sacrifice for loved ones and others through some acts of community service, we all too often forget the story each of us has to tell. The Christmas Story is our story of salvation. We are reminded during this season of the stories leading up to Christ fulfilling all prophecy to be one of us and show us the Way, the Truth, and the Life that is Christ Himself. When we do pause to remember Christ's story, we begin to remember the importance each individual has to God Almighty. We are reminded to recognize the importance of each individual in our lives and give God thanksgiving for the gift of that person.

I was reminded of the innate human tendency to be inwardly selfish in my busyness recently when two of my daughters' events "intruded" into my schedule. I lost my temper because I didn't realize they needed transportation to an event and had made other plans for the time it would take to transport them. Unfortunately, during the rather long drive to the event and home, the atmosphere in the car was mostly silent except when I asked one of my daughter a few questions. Of course, driving in the rain with drivers who probably shouldn't be on the road, crowding into my lane, and the busy traffic soon forced me to calm down and carefully drive. I realized praying and thinking about why I was mad that I was at fault, not my daughters or anyone else. I had failed to stay aware of the larger schedules in my life and my tacit approval of my family's schedules that required my participation. I had failed to pay attention to my loved ones' stories. Each member of my family has their own individual thoughts, feelings, perspectives and things they are looking forward to, often quite different from my own individual story.

As we make our individual and family preparations this Advent and Christmas Seasons, let us remember to make time in our busy schedules to spend time with those who mean the most to us, and work to understand their stories a little better. We can also make time in our busyness to reach out to those who may not have family or friends, but still have a story to share. For many people, this time of year is very difficult. They may have lost loved ones, lost a job, or have few friends to turn to for support. We can hopefully live the story of Jesus and render a helping hand to someone who truly needs it. There is much more to Advent and Christmas than rushing around for all the right gifts to wrap and put under our trees. The true gifts in our lives are those living, breathing, unique, individuals all around us that we all too often take for granted.

May we accept God's gifts of others in our lives and give Him thanks by being available to them, share in their stories, and share His story with them. May God continue to bless you all richly and may the Christ Child forever make us child-like to those around us. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Vivat Jesus!
Leo