

POPE'S MONTHLY PRAYER INTENTION FOR DECEMBER

"Let us pray for the catechists, summoned to announce the Word of God: may they be its witnesses, with courage and creativity and in the power of the Holy Spirit" Pope Francis

Praying for Grace: Ask for the grace to support our catechists well, to recognize and appreciate their vital role in the life of the Church.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as in all wisdom you teach and admonish one another, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or in deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." (Colossians 3:16-17)

Reflection question:

One role of the catechist is to serve as a witness to the Gospel. **How can we fulfill this role in our own lives?** Reflect and share with your group.

Pray for our Catechists here at Holy Family who have or are just starting back up in their respective ministries; RCIA, Youth Ministry, HFkids, Baptism, First Communion & Confirmation

Prayer for our Catechists

Loving Father, we pray today for our catechists. We thank you for their gift of ministry in your Church. Grant them your wisdom that they may grow in the understanding and teaching of your Word. Grant them also your love that they may be fruitful heralds of your Word and lead others to love you. Amen

Advent is a journey towards Bethlehem. May we let ourselves be drawn by the light of God made man.

Pope Francis

DECEMBER 2021



SMALL GROUPS

HOLY FAMILY NEWSLETTER



Advent as a Group...

Encourage one another to invite someone to Christmas Mass!

Many people who do not attend Mass at Christmas say that if someone they knew invited them to Church at Christmas time they would go, commit as a group to invite your neighbours, friends and co-workers to Christmas Mass.

Love those who are struggling.

Remember there are people who struggle this time of year. There may be people within your own group or friends that are hurting. This is one of the best times to reach out and show love to them, invite them to your celebrations and your traditions around the birth of our Saviour. People are not only vulnerable they are more open to invitation to connect during the holidays.

Have a pot luck Christmas party with your group!

Whether you are meeting in person or on Zoom you can still break bread together! Have every person prepare something and divide it for the number of people in your group, they can be distributed throughout the group and have a virtual ZOOM party where the food and festivities can still be enjoyed together.

Spend time together as a group.

Attend Mass or Eucharistic Adoration, go Christmas shopping together or maybe plan an outdoor hike! Our small groups become part of our families, celebrate one another at Christmas by being together.

Plan for the New Year.

Many small groups stop meeting over the holidays because life simply gets too busy. Have a plan to get the group back together after the holiday, don't let the break drag on. Maybe have a special new year kick off where you will set a path for the coming year for your group

Whatever your group does take a photo and share it with Kim so they can be shared in January's newsletter to help inspire people to join and form their own amazing small group, and grow in their Faith journey

Child is Born!

Reflect on Advent as a Group!

'Child is Born' Advent Reflections

The joy Christians experience at Christmas comes from God's Gift to mankind. In 'Child is Born!', we see once again how God spared nothing to save the world. Foretold centuries earlier, Jesus' birth marks the arrival of God in the flesh, born of a virgin, sent to save us from our sins. This He did for you and me.

If your group is still looking for an Advent Reflection to do together, there are still copies of Fr László's 'Child is Born' daily reflections complete with 'reflect & discuss' questions for each day. Copies are available at the back of the church for \$5 - all proceeds go to support the Young Adult Pilgrimage.

How healthy is your Small Group?

You may have noticed over time in your small group that some people are dedicated to being there every time you meet, others only occasional participants, and still others come and go. It goes without saying, that the level of health of the relationships within the group will lead to the health of the group as a whole. The foundation of the relationships is the acceptance and trust built between the members. They should feel comfortable to say if there is something they do not agree with, or don't understand, or an issue or topic they would like to explore, or times they cannot attend. So taking time to really get to know each other and care for each other will go a long way to building these relationships. Defining some of the expectations of being a member of your small group can relieve any questions or insecurities people may have. To see some principles to guide your conversations about who you are as a small group, please see the document Fr. Laszlo has shared that outlines 6 important aims: 1. Know and serve one another persistently. 2. Depend on the Lord prayerfully. 3. Meet God through his word faithfully and expectantly. 4. Pursue disciples for Jesus boldly. 5. Rest in the gospel confidently and humbly. 6. Work out our salvation soberly and joyfully.

We pray that these resonate with the heart and spirit of your little community, and bring you to an intentional conviction to continue to grow in faith, with joy.

Visit hollyfamilywhitby.ca/small-groups/ and scroll to the bottom for the link to Father's document!

REMINDER

Fr Laszlo would like to join one of your sessions to experience how wonderful your group is and to hear about your new vision statement. What better way to start the new year than with a clear path for your group to follow!

Contact Kim to set up a time when Father can come and meet with your group hollyfamily.kim@gmail.com

LECTIO DIVINA

Reflecting on the Sunday Gospel

Lectio Divina in Latin means "divine reading" It is a meditative way of reading the Bible in which we let go of our own agendas and open ourselves to what God is trying to say to us. Lectio Divina is more about divine listening than divine reading when we take the time to do it. We do it to become better listeners of the Lord. When we feel like we don't know what to say in prayer we can turn to this. Read a Bible passage and try to listen to what God is asking of you, be open to peace, gratitude and living rooted in Christ. "It should never be forgotten that the Word of God is a lamp for our feet and a light for our path." Pope Benedict XVI

How to pray Lectio Divina in 4 Steps

1 READ

Take a short passage from the Bible and read it carefully, let it soak in. Read it over three times, slower each time. Use the upcoming Sunday Gospel or choose a familiar passage.

2 MEDITATE

After reading or listening for a second time, consider: what sticks out to you? Is there an image or phrase or single word that you are drawn to. Let that be what your focus on, meditate on what God might be trying to show you through what stands out. There is NO WRONG ANSWER this is individual.

3 PRAY

Read it over a third time and now respond to the text and ask God to show you what He wants you to take from it. This could lead you to offer thanks, ask forgiveness, or simply talk with God about what the passage brought to your heart.

4 CONTEMPLATE

Rest with God. Be aware of God's presence with you. Listen for His voice.

Visit: hollyfamilywhitby.ca/lectio-divina-2/ for additional resources on Lectio Divina.