



St. Joseph's
Catechesis of the Good Shepherd (CGS)
Newsletter – December 2019

Communications/Reminders

Schedule Notes: Christmas Break -
Tuesday December 24th,
Sunday December 29th and
Tuesday December 31st

Prayer Table Items: Advent items for your family prayer space were provided just before the start of Advent. See this [CGS USA newsletter](#) for more ideas for the start of Advent.

For your Enjoyment: Pictures from around our Atria



Did you know: What is the Parousia?

Most people are unfamiliar with this (Greek) term, more commonly known as the Second Coming of Christ. As explained to our Level II children, the History of the Kingdom of God - which began with Creation, and culminated with Christ's birth, death and resurrection (Redemption) - will be complete at the Parousia. We reflect on what this might be like, and look to scripture for clues. We read in 1Corinthians 15:28 that "God will be all in all", and wonder what it would be like if God's love and light filled the entire world. The Bible describes that there will be "a new heaven and a new earth; ...there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain;" (Revelation 21:1,4). Surely this is something to wait for in joyful hope! As we prepare for the celebration of the First Coming, we also anticipate and continue to prepare for the Parousia!

December in our Atria

For the Advent Season, we change our prayer clothes to purple and prepare our prayer tables with an Advent Wreath, lighting a new candle each week as we grow closer to celebrating the coming of the Messiah, our King. Our CGS Level I (3-5 year old) children reflect on scriptural prophecies that foretell of His coming, and the events that took place in Nazareth and Bethlehem leading up to Jesus' birth. Our Level II (1st/2nd grade) children, with their understanding of the future fulfillment of the Kingdom of God, reflect on further Messianic prophecies that give clues about the time of the Parousia (second coming).

Level I Atrium (pre-K/K) Spotlight -

Messianic Prophecies

We wait four weeks of Advent for Christmas to come. Long before Jesus' birth, the people waited for hundreds of years for a great gift: the coming of the Messiah. To prepare the people for this great gift, God revealed clues to the prophets who listened to God with their whole hearts. Throughout Advent, we reflect on some of the clues given to the prophets that we find in the Old Testament. From the prophets, we learn that the gift will be "a Great Light" (*Isaiah 9:1*), born to a virgin/young maid (*Isaiah 7:14*) in the town of Bethlehem (*Micah 5:2*), have many names, including "Prince of Peace" (*Isaiah 9:5*), and he will be a star and king for all (*Numbers 24:17b*).

Level II Atrium (1st/2nd Grade) Spotlight -

Prophecy of the Peaceable Kingdom

The selection of prophecies in our Level II atrium includes one from Isaiah (11:6-9) which contains seemingly inconceivable images, including sheep having wolves as guests, leopards sleeping with baby goats, cows and bears being neighbors, and a child who is their guide playing by the cobra. How could this be? Isaiah tells us:

*"For the earth shall be filled with knowledge
of the Lord, as water covers the sea."*

Familiar with the promise of the Parousia - when "God will be all in all" - we have new insight into what this might be like. What can we do to help bring about this Peaceable Kingdom? Who can guide us? How can we use this Advent to prepare for not just the celebration of the First Coming, but the Second Coming of the Messiah as well?

For the Home

Preparing for Christmas during Advent

- Use [this](#) to guide family reflection on the scriptural account of the birth of Jesus.
- Choose from the prophetic scripture passages mentioned above and read together during prayer time. Wonder about all the names given by Isaiah (9:6). Who can this child be who has so many names? Does your child have a favorite? Use this name as you pray together.

May you be blessed with joyful anticipation and Christ's Peace this Advent season,
St. Joseph's CGS Team

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