

St. Francis of Assisi Parish: Generations of Faith

A Year on Prayer: Connecting to God in Traditional and Unique Ways

Recent documents from the U. S. Bishops challenge all members of the Church to embrace the practice of lifelong learning of the faith. At every age, there is something to be learned and experienced on an individual's journey of faith. Generations of Faith offers a unique experience for all members of our faith community to learn and grow together in relationship with Jesus and His Church. In this sixth season of Generations of Faith our community will devote time to a study of prayer. It is our goal that all participants will connect with God in new ways as they become more aware of prayer as an expression of an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ.

In this month of **December** we devote our study to the Traditional Prayers of the Church, the means by which we pray when our own words fall short of expressing our desires.

December 2009

G of F EVENT

Celebrate the Event: Lessons and Carols

2 pm

In the church
On Epiphany Sunday
January 3rd

This event is hosted by our 9th grade students.

Christmas Day, a day the Church sets aside for remembering the birth of Jesus, will be past when we gather for our third G of F event. Yet we will gather as community for a Lessons and Carols event on the Feast of Epiphany to emphasize that the Christmas Season is not over until the Feast of the Baptism of The Lord on January 10.

Janet Schaeffler, OP in an article published in the Nov./Dec. 09 issue of "Religion Teacher's Journal" states that "the Gospels of the Christmas Season stand together to tell the wonderful story of the Incarnation of Jesus—God taking on humanity and embracing the human condition. Christmas

magnanimously reminds us that Jesus is present with us, in our lives, and in our world. This overwhelming reality sustains us from childhood through every stage of our lives."

The reality of the Incarnation of Jesus deserves celebration beyond Christmas Day. Come and join us to remember the Christmas story and the great gift of God's love in the Incarnation of Jesus through prayer, word and song. †

*"Let My Prayer
be counted as
incense before
you."*



~Psalm 141

TRADITIONAL Prayer

Traditional prayer, often considered rote, tends to be neglected by people who claim to take their faith seriously. *In The Words We Pray*, published by Loyola Press, author Amy Welborn offers an insightful exploration into 18 traditional prayers and the vital spiritual role each one can play. This enchanting prayer book inserted in each Generations of Faith homekit, includes the history and traditional use of each prayer as well as personal anecdotes to show why the body of Catholic traditional prayers is "a treasure worth rediscovering." From the Psalms to traditional Marian prayers to the Lord's Prayer to Amen, the prayers explored in *The Words We Pray* are gifts from the past that can greatly benefit our spiritual life today.

The Religious Ed office has a few extra copies for purchase for \$10.00. Call 323-6272, x2 if interested. †

BEYOND December 25

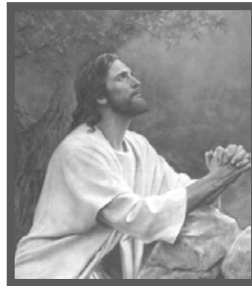
Here are some ideas for celebrating Christmas beyond December 25:

- Attend the masses of the Christmas Season:
 - The Feast of Mary the Mother of God Jan. 1
 - The Feast of Epiphany Jan. 3
 - The Baptism of the Lord Jan. 10
- Pray the rosary as a family reflecting on the Joyful Mysteries
- Visit someone who is ill or homebound to bring some Christmas cheer
- Bake something special as a gift for a neighbor in need.
- Plan a special family night together to remember the love of the Holy Family.
- Change your Advent Candles to white candles and continue to pray together each night using the Christmas Scriptures.
- Continue to play Christmas hymns
- Host a Holy Family Party with friends from church (See insert in homekit)
- Light a fire in your fireplace and talk with one another about how Jesus is the light of the world.
- Invite Jesus every day to find a home in your heart.
- Watch a Christmas religious video
- Plan a ceremony on the Feast of Epiphany, placing the Magi at your Christmas crèche. Read the

story from Scripture Matthew 2:1-12.

- Extend your gift giving throughout the Christmas Season, giving a small homemade gift on each day.
- Remember to pray each day thanking God for the gift of His Son Jesus. †

Scripture and Traditional Prayer



Below are some Scriptural references that point us to prayers of the Church.

The Our Father

Matthew 6:9-13

Luke 11:2-4

The Hail Mary

Luke 1:28

Luke 1:42

The Magnificat

Luke 1:46-55

The Benedictus

Luke 1:66-80

The Angelus

Luke 1:26-38

John 1:14

The Gloria

Luke 2:14

SANTA'S PRAYER

The sleigh was packed. The reindeer were fed ~ But Santa still knelt by the side of the bed.

"Dear Father," he prayed. "Be with me tonight ~ There's much work to do and my schedule is tight.

I must jump in my sleigh and streak through the sky ~ Knowing full well that a reindeer can't fly.

I will visit each household before the first light ~ I'll cover the world and all in one night.

With sleigh bells a-ringing, I'll land on each roof ~ Amid the soft clatter of each little hoof.

To get in the house is the difficult part ~ So I'll slide down the chimney of each little heart.

My sack will hold toys to grant all their wishes ~ The supply will be endless like the loaves and the fishes.

I will fill all the stockings and not leave a track ~ I'll eat every cookie that's left for my snack.

I can do all these things Lord, only through You ~ I just need Your blessing, then it's easy to do.

All this is to honor the birth of the One ~ That was sent to redeem us, Your most Holy Son.

So to all of my friends, lest Your glory I rob ~ Please Lord, remind them, who gave me this job." †