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Thoughts Along the Way

Bishop Liam Cary

Joys of Advent

Each Advent turns our minds and hearts to the Mystery of the Word made Flesh—where He came from, how He got here, why He came. This liturgical focus lends a particular Advent coloration to the Joyful Mysteries of the Rosary, especially the first three: the Annunciation, the Visitation, and the Birth of our Lord.

Advent invites me to *personalize* these Joyful Mysteries, to connect the hidden events in the early life of Jesus with the corresponding events in my own. Does what happened to Jesus have anything to do with what happened to me? Can the Joyful “chapters” in Jesus’ story shed light on the unfolding tale that is mine?

The first Joyful Mystery is The Annunciation to Mary. We could just as well call it The Conception of Jesus, for in the moment of Mary’s “Yes” to the Angel she conceives by the Holy Spirit, and the Eternal Son of the Father takes flesh in her womb. One moment He was not there; the next moment He was.

At Mary’s greeting, the child in Elizabeth’s womb leapt for joy at the nearness of the Child in Mary’s womb.

So it was with you and me in the moment of our conception. One second we did not exist; the next second we did. But the statistically unlikely coming together of our parents’ germ cells which brought this change into being was something we had absolutely nothing to do with. It was not we who set this life-forming process in motion nor did we bring it to completion. From start to finish it was pure gift, this joyful mystery of our conception.

The same is true of the nine months we spent in the womb of our mother—a forgotten “memory” which the second Joyful Mystery, the Visitation, brings to mind. At Mary’s greeting, the child in Elizabeth’s womb leapt for joy at the nearness of the Child in Mary’s womb. No doubt we leapt too, in our mother’s womb. For that first earthly home was waiting to receive us, perfectly designed for our protection, growth, and development. But we were not there to design it, nor can we fathom the mind of its Designer. From the first month to the ninth it was pure gift, this joy-filled mystery of pregnancy.

In the dark and watery recesses of the womb our every need was effortlessly met. Had it been left to our decision, we would be there still; we would never have left. But, like Mary’s Child in the Third Joyful Mystery, we were suddenly cast out in the violent



eruption of our birth. And there waiting to receive us were the welcoming hands of our parents, a man and a woman made one by the complementary union of matrimony at the service of life.

We did not assign the time or place for our coming into this world; upon our arrival we found ourselves already placed. The joyful mystery of birth is pure gift. Everything has been prepared in advance for our coming.

Reflecting this Advent on Jesus’ conception, gestation, and birth—and on our own—we realize that every human being enters this world equally situated on the receiving end of Mystery. Someone has prepared a place for us at the Banquet of Life. Who are we to deny admission to another like ourselves when the Creator of the world has taken such great and loving care to make room for us?



Pensamientos Del Camino

Obispo Liam Cary

Alegría de Adviento

Cada Adviento vuelve nuestra mente y corazón al misterio de la Palabra hecha carne, de donde vino, cómo llegó hasta aquí, por qué vino. Este enfoque litúrgico se presta a una coloración particular de Adviento, a los Misterios Gozosos del Rosario, sobre todo los primeros tres: la Anunciación, la Visitación y el Nacimiento de nuestro Señor.

Adviento me invita a personalizar estos Misterios Gozosos, para conectar los eventos ocultos en la vida temprana de Jesús con los eventos correspondientes a la mía. ¿Lo que le sucedió a Jesús tiene algo que ver con lo que me pasó a mí? ¿Pueden los "capítulos" alegres de la historia de Jesús dar luz a la historia que se desarrolla en la mía?

El primer misterio gozoso es la Anunciación a María. Podríamos simplemente llamarlo la concepción de Jesús, porque en el momento del "Sí" de María al ángel ella concibe por obra del Espíritu Santo, y el Hijo Eterno del Padre toma carne en su vientre. En el momento él no estaba allí; enseguida ya estaba.

Así fue con usted y conmigo en el momento de nuestra concepción. En Un segundo no existimos; en el siguiente segundo ya existíamos. Pero en la unión de las células germinales de nuestros padres que trajeron este cambio a la existencia fue algo en lo cual nosotros nada tuvimos que ver. No fuimos nosotros los que hicimos este proceso de formación de vida ni tampoco los que lo completamos. De principio a fin, este alegre misterio de nuestra concepción, fue un don.

Lo mismo es cierto de los nueve meses que pasamos en el vientre de nuestra madre, un "recuerdo" olvidado que el segundo misterio gozoso, la Visitación, nos recuerda. Al saludo de María, el niño en el vientre de Isabel saltó de alegría por la cercanía del niño en el vientre de María. Sin duda, nosotros también saltaríamos, en el vientre de nuestra madre. Ese primer hogar terrenal estaba esperando para recibirnos, perfectamente diseñado para nuestra protección, crecimiento y desarrollo. Pero no fuimos nosotros quienes lo diseñamos, ni podemos entender la mente de su diseñador. Desde el primer mes hasta el noveno fue un puro don, este misterio del embarazo lleno de alegría.

En los oscuros y acuosos recovecos de la matriz todas nuestras necesidades fueron satisfechas sin esfuerzo nuestro. Si hubiera sido nuestra la decisión, estaríamos allí todavía; nunca hubiéramos salido. Pero, al igual que el hijo de María en el Tercer Misterio Gozoso, fuimos echados fuera de repente en la erupción violenta de nuestro

nacimiento. Y allí esperando para recibirnos y darnos la bienvenida estaban las manos de nuestros padres, un hombre y una mujer hechos un solo ser, por la unión complementaria del matrimonio al servicio de la vida.

Nosotros no asignamos el momento ni el lugar para nuestra entrada a este mundo; a nuestra llegada nos encontramos ya colocados. El misterio gozoso del nacimiento es puro don. Todo ha sido preparado con anticipación para nuestra llegada.

Reflexionando este Adviento en la concepción, gestación y nacimiento, de Jesús, y en el nuestro propio nos damos cuenta de que todo ser humano llega a este mundo por igual, situado en la recepción del Misterio. Alguien ha preparado un lugar para nosotros en el banquete de la vida. ¿Quiénes somos nosotros para negar la admisión a otro ser como a nosotros mismos cuando el Creador del mundo ha tenido tan gran y amoroso cuidado para hacer lugar para nosotros?

Priestly Ordination Anniversaries

Congratulations to the following as they celebrate their ordination anniversaries during December.

Rev. Rob Irwin, Idaho	Dec. 8, 1995
Rev. Eduardo Nebelung, Boardman	Dec. 21, 1984
Rev. Dennis Strachota, Retired, Bend	Dec. 23, 1967

We are most grateful for the years of service of all our Priests and Bishops. Please keep them in your prayers.

The Traditional Latin Mass in Bend

The Extraordinary Form of the Mass ("The Latin Mass") will be celebrated every other week at 1:00 PM at St. Francis of Assisi Historic Church **beginning today**, November 30th. Regular Celebrants for this Mass will be Father Andrew Szymakowski of this Diocese and Father John Boyle from the Archdiocese of Portland. For more information contact John C. Driscoll at johncdriscoll1068@gmail.com or Stephanie Swee at swee0574@gmail.com.

November 30th - First Sunday of Advent

In today's Gospel, Jesus warns us to be watchful because we don't know when the Lord is coming.

Beginning the Church's liturgical year, Advent (from, "ad-venire" in Latin or "to come to") is the season encompassing the four Sundays (and weekdays) leading up to the celebration of Christmas.

The Advent season is a time of preparation that directs our hearts and minds to Christ's second coming at the end of time and also to the anniversary of the Lord's birth on Christmas. The final days of Advent, from December 17 to December 24, focus particularly on our preparation for the celebrations of the Nativity of our Lord (Christmas).

A Journey of Faith for Us and The Bishop's Annual Appeal

This weekend we celebrate the First Sunday of Advent. It is a time of spiritual preparation, and an ideal time to reflect on our lives as disciples of Jesus Christ, especially as we anticipate the coming of the Christ child and the year to come.

This weekend also marks the completion of the 2014 Bishop's Annual Appeal in the Diocese of Baker. It has been a journey of faith and a time that has revealed the unwavering generosity of those who made a gift to the Appeal and share its vision.

Gifts amounting to a total of \$327,000 have been made to the Bishop's Appeal thus far, with 37 of the diocesan faith communities having reached or exceeded their Appeal goals. This represents 64% of the 58 Catholic communities that have participated in the Appeal. Here is a list of these communities:

◆ St. Richard in Adel	293%
◆ St. Francis in Arlington	103%
◆ Holy Family in Arock	204%
◆ St. Francis de Sales Cathedral in Baker City	127%
◆ St. Francis of Assisi in Bend	120%
◆ St. Frances Cabrini in Bonanza	110%
◆ Holy Family in Burns	105%
◆ Holy Family in Christmas Valley	179%
◆ St. John in Condon	125%
◆ St. Thomas Aquinas in Crane	183%
◆ Our Lady of Loretto in Drewsey	151%
◆ St. Katherine in Enterprise	134%
◆ St. Catherine in Fossil	111%
◆ St. Therese in Halfway	115%
◆ St. Patrick in Heppner	111%
◆ Our Lady of Angels in Hermiston	109%
◆ St. William in Ione	100%
◆ St. Elizabeth in John Day	140%
◆ St. Bernard in Jordan Valley	160%
◆ St. Charles in Juntura	118%
◆ St. Pius X in Klamath Falls	161%
◆ St. Patrick in Lakeview	183%
◆ St. Mary in Maupin	215%
◆ St. Bridget of Kildare in Nyssa	103%
◆ St. John in Paisley	161%
◆ St. Mary in Pendleton	100%
◆ St. Helen in Pilot Rock	174%
◆ St. Thomas in Plush	235%
◆ St. Joseph in Prineville	186%
◆ St. Thomas in Redmond	111%
◆ St. Edward the Martyr in Sisters	104%
◆ Holy Trinity in Sunriver	165%
◆ Sacred Heart in Union	157%
◆ St. Joseph in Unity	144%
◆ St. Patrick in Vale	264%
◆ St. Kateri Tekakwitha in Warm Springs	103%
◆ St. Mary in Wasco & St. John the Baptist in Grass Valley	100%

Faith formation, especially in light of the diocese's emphasis on the New Evangelization, is an important pastoral priority for the Diocese of Baker, and here is where each of us makes a difference when we contribute to the Bishop's Annual Appeal. Your generous gift enables the diocese to offer a number of opportunities to Catholics in their own journey of faith.

And what about your personal journey of faith as we begin this Advent season? What are you doing to care for and nurture your own spiritual life as you navigate the "busyness" of the coming holiday season? Let us consider seven ways we can embrace the spirit of Advent during the month of December.

1. Make a list of everything that you want to accomplish for yourself and your family this month. Then make room in your calendar every day for specific times to devote to personal prayer, spiritual reading and reflection.

2. Take time out for yourself once daily: Establish a specified time and find a place for a moment's relaxation. Pay attention to your breathing and be calm. Say a prayer of thanks, and look upon this as a graced moment that helps you appreciate the presence of the Lord.

3. Reflect on the daily scripture readings: Taking in the liturgical readings of the day is an excellent way to reflect on our life of faith and cultivate a closer friendship with the Lord.

4. Pray for patience, especially when shopping or while driving: If you find yourself becoming anxious or upset, say a "Glory Be" and ask Jesus for the gift of patience. Then make a conscious effort to be more patient in that moment.

5. Do something nice for someone every day. It might be an encouraging word, a phone call, a note of appreciation or a little act of kindness. It will open your heart in ways that will surprise you.

6. Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Attend your parish penance service, go to confession, and take advantage of the opportunity to cleanse your soul in preparation for the coming of Jesus.

7. Take stock of the talents God has entrusted to you. What are your personal gifts? How are you using these gifts? Can you be a better steward of these gifts in the coming year?

If you keep your Advent commitment, each day you will recognize the spiritual rhythm of your life in a more profound manner. The prayer time will restore your spirit; the spiritual insights will help keep you focused; and your patient persistence will help you be ready to open your heart to the Christmas experience with new inspiration and joy!

Bishop Cary's Schedule

Dec. 12: 5:30 Mass at St. Thomas, Redmond

Dec. 13: Advent Retreat at Sacred Heart, Klamath Falls



Religious Retirement Collection

Since the National Religious Retirement Office was established in 1988, the annual appeal has collected over \$726 million, and donors often speak of this campaign as a timely response to priests and religious who have ministered throughout their lives to others.

Over the past 26 years the Diocese of Baker has sent \$842,612.83 to the national office for this collection. In 2013 we received \$93,416.90 for the Religious Retirement Collection, and 10 percent was sent to the national office; the remainder stayed in our Diocese. Thank you for your generosity and support. As many of you already know, the Priest's pension plan is significantly under-funded. The Diocese of Baker also makes payments to the dioceses of our foreign-born priests based on years of service in our diocese. Because of our large unfunded pension liability and our outstanding retirement liability for our foreign priests, the diocese will again allocate the majority of this collection to the Priest's Retirement Program. This collection and our own Bishop's Annual Appeal are two of their major funding sources.

Our diocesan and foreign priests have served the Church and they have done so for relatively little material reward. These dedicated priests deserve a just retirement for their committed years of service to the Diocese.

We will continue to support the religious sisters and brothers who have served in our Diocese by remitting a portion of this collection to the national office. We urge you to continue to support this important and necessary collection.

All are Invited to an Annual Advent Family Gathering



Please join us Sunday, December 7th, from 3:00-6:00 PM at the Diocesan Retreat Center for the Annual Advent Family Celebration. This annual event is sponsored by Mother Mary's Daughters and the Diocese of Baker with the focus on the Holy Family. The gathering is perfect to teach children about the meaning of Advent through praise, music, and family fun. We invite our Priests and Religious as our guests as they are always in our prayers and an important part of our diocesan families. So, please come and join us for:

Eucharistic Adoration Holy Hour and the Advent Scriptural Reading in St. Mary's Chapel, Lighting of the Advent Wreath, Family crafts, Traditional Advent music and singing, Dinner

Also, remember to save the date for the Christmas Family Celebration—January 4th, Epiphany Sunday, from 3:00-6:00 PM also at the Diocesan Retreat Center.

Eucharistic Adoration Holy Hour and the Christmas Scriptural reading in St. Mary's Chapel, Christmas Carols, Dinner, Trimming of the Christmas Tree



- *Both events will be Pot-Luck. *Music will be provided for both events by *LeRoy and Friend*.
- * (Donations requested at the event to help pay for the cost of the facility.)

Parish News: St. Augustine, Merrill



Pictured above—New pastor, Father Francis Obijekwu, with his new St. Augustine Parish Family.

St. Augustine Youth Group

For the second year, the Youth Group of St. Augustine parish built a float and participated in the parade that celebrated 77 years of Potato Festivals.



Theirs was the only religious float in this year's parade and their theme was *Celebrating 106 years of the Merrill Catholic Church*. They were awarded a monetary prize in that category. The youth group is hopeful that their participation and hard work will inspire other Christian groups to participate next year.