



# ST. PIUS X PARISH

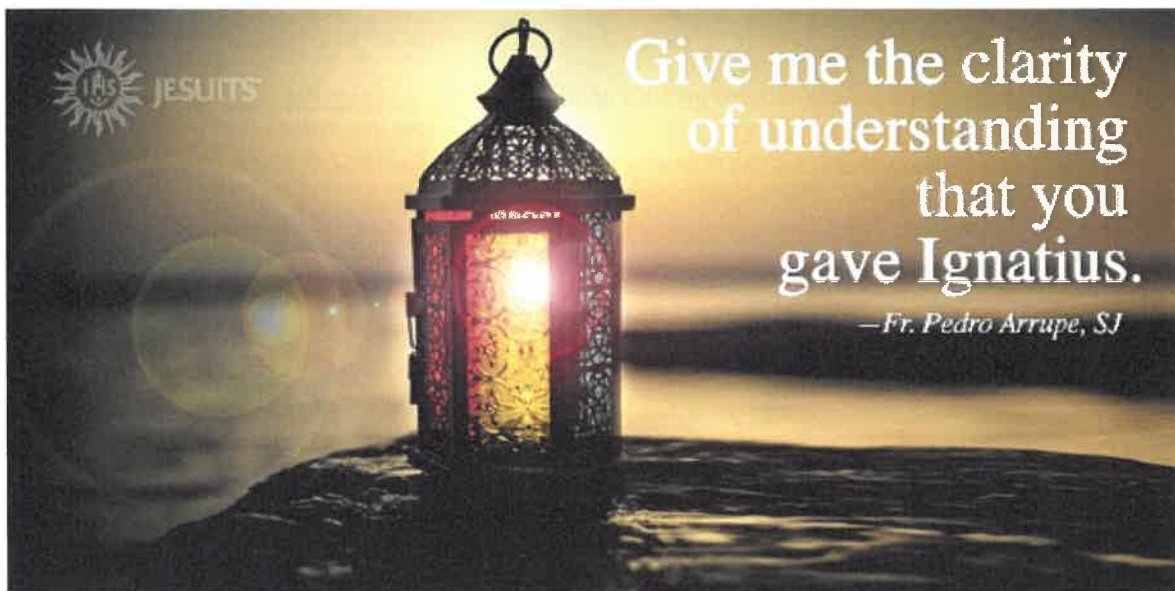
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OUR PIUS UPDATE  
NOVEMBER 30, 2021



## A “JUST SHOOT” IS COMING



The Church’s season of Advent began on November 28—a season of preparation, of yearning for Christ, and a season of hope.

In the translation we hear at Mass of the first reading, Jeremiah describes the Messiah as a “*just shoot*”—a tiny but righteous sign of life sprouting amid the devastation experienced by the ancient Jews during the Babylonian exile. In our own world today, we experience devastation in many forms—in war and violence, in the sickness and death of the pandemic, in racism and the disrespect for the dignity of human life, and in the tremendous and seemingly unending divisions in our society and even our Church.

And yet we know that a “*just shoot*” is coming. Hope is on the horizon. During these days when we pray “*O Come, Emmanuel!*” with Christians throughout the world, let us ask the Lord to stir up within us a desire for conversion, for peace, and for himself.

—Fr. Chris Kellerman, SJ, is a Jesuit priest and member of the Central and Southern Province. He serves as interim executive director of the Jesuit Social Research Institute at Loyola University New Orleans and as assistant pastor at Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Baton Rouge, LA. In the Fall of 2022, Orbis Press will publish Chris's new book on the history of the Catholic Church, slavery, and abolitionism.

### Prayer

Coming Messiah,  
cleanse me of my sins,  
prepare my heart to receive you,  
and infuse me with the joy and hope of your advent.

—Fr. Chris Kellerman, SJ

SOURCE: [www.JesuitPrayer.org](http://www.JesuitPrayer.org)

## ADVENT EXAMEN



Begin by taking in a deep breath, taking in God's love, the light of Christ, the wisdom of the Holy Spirit. Exhale all your worries, your challenges, and your fears. During this time of Advent let us reflect on what we can do to prepare for the Lord.

1. Invite the Holy Spirit to help you see the day as the newborn baby Jesus sees it. What joy have you found today? Where have you felt God's love? What have you done today to prepare the way for Jesus being born into this world for you?
2. Now think about your day as if looking at it through the eyes of a child; what do you see? Did something surprise you? Was it something someone said to you or something you are grateful for? What did you recognize as gifts (thinking about the gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh brought to Jesus)? Thank God for the gifts he has given to you today.
3. Take a moment to reflect on the times today when God was especially present to you. Recognize your feelings in those moments. How did you prepare your heart for God's presence in the coming of Jesus? Where did you feel God's loving arms wrapped around you the way Jesus felt Mary's arms? How did you prepare yourself to experience God's love, forgiveness, and hope?
4. Now take a moment to think about the times when God seemed to be hidden. Where did you struggle to see the Messiah in your life—the way some failed to recognize the birth of the Messiah when Jesus was born? When may you have seen the need for love and didn't respond (maybe like the innkeeper), or the opportunity for forgiveness and you walked away? How was your heart prepared? Ask God to forgive you for anything that moved your heart away from God's love and recognizing the birth of Jesus in you. And ask God to help you to open your heart and become the person that God created you to be.
5. Finally, prepare for the hope of Jesus Christ in your life. Think about what you are hopeful for, what you are looking forward to during Advent and the Christmas season. Is your hope like that of a child on Christmas morning? What gifts will you share to be hope for someone else? Ask God to bless all in your life as you prepare the way of the Lord, and ask God to be with you today and every day.

**SOURCE:** Laurie Marshanke, [www.ignatianspirituality.com](http://www.ignatianspirituality.com)

## FINDING OURSELVES IN GOD



The biblical creation story says, “*Let us make humans in our image*” (*Genesis 1:26*). The plural pronoun is a first hint that we are going to be brought into a relational, participatory, and shared life. The secret is somehow planted within our deepest identity and slowly reveals itself—if we are attentive to this “*reverence humming in [us]*”, as Jane Fonda once described it. [1]

Our DNA is divine, and the divine indwelling is never earned by any behavior, group membership, or ritual whatsoever, but only recognized and realized (*see Romans 11:6; Ephesians 2:8–10*) and thus fallen in love with. When we are ready, we will be both underwhelmed and overwhelmed at the boundless mystery of our own humanity. We will know we are standing under the same waterfall of mercy as everybody else and receiving an undeserved radical grace, which is the root cause of every ensouled being.

When I started in ministry in the early 1970s in Cincinnati and worked with young people, it seemed like I spent most of the time trying to convince teenagers that they were good. They all seemed to endlessly hate and doubt themselves, often with a little help from parenting and clergy. Later I saw it in adults, too, who were also well practiced in hating and fearing themselves. What the Scriptures promise us is that we are objectively and inherently children of God (*see 1 John 3:2*). And you can’t change that! This is not psychological worthiness; it is ontological, metaphysical, substantial worthiness that cannot be gained or lost. When this given God image becomes our operative self-image, we are home free! Such a Gospel is just about the best good news anyone could hope for!

I am convinced that so much guilt, negative self-image, self-hatred, and self-preoccupation occurs because we have taken our cues and identity from a competitive and comparing world. But Jesus told us to never take this world as normative. Jesus asks, “*Why do you look to one another for approval instead of the approval that comes from the one God?*” (*John 5:44*). So many of us accept either a successful or a low self-image inside of a system of false images to begin with! (Smart, good looking, classy, loser—are all just words humans create). This will never work. We must find our true self “*hidden within Christ in God,*” as Paul says in *Colossians 3:3*. Or, as Teresa of Ávila envisioned God telling her, “*If you wish to find Me / In yourself seek Me. [2] Then we do not go up and down, but we are built on the Rock of Ages. It is the very shape of all spiritual maturity, regardless of what religion we may belong to.*”

**SOURCE:** Fr. Richard Rohr’s Daily Meditations, [www.cac.org](http://www.cac.org)

## NEW OPTIONS FOR ATTENDING MASS



Recent directives from the Department of Health and from the Archbishop's office now permit us to have Mass where Vax Pass and proof of ID are required for entry. Full capacity is now possible, especially now that the Christmas season is coming soon.

Our parishioners have various concerns and needs regarding COVID-19. We wish to give everyone the opportunity to choose which Mass best serves their needs. We are trying to follow the example of Jesus by welcoming everyone. Therefore, effective next weekend of *December 4 and 5, 2021 (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent)*

- The *Saturday, 4:45 pm Mass* will *continue with the COVID protocols we have been recently using.*
  - Protocols same as we have been using - *No Vax Pass*
  - Check in at door - name, contact information
  - Masks at all times
  - Physical distancing both when seated and moving
  - No congregational singing
  - Limited capacity - I20
  
- Our *Sunday, 10:00 am Mass* will *require a Vax Pass and proof of ID for entry.*
  - Check in at the door *with Vax Pass and proof of ID*
  - Name and contact information at the door
  - Masks at all times - both seated and moving
  - No physical distancing when seated
  - Physical distancing when moving
  - Congregation and choir sing with masks on
  - Full capacity is possible

*Masks are required for both Masses  
as well as signing in with your name and contact information.*

*Our weekday Masses will continue the same COVID-19 protocols as we have been using recently,  
that is, the same as Saturday afternoon Mass.*

