

THE YEAR OF FAITH: 2012-2013

# ADVENT



GOD IS ALWAYS  
FAITHFUL!

STORIES WRITTEN BY NATIVITY PARISHIONERS

I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD, THE FATHER ALMIGHTY,  
MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH, OF ALL THINGS VISIBLE AND  
INVISIBLE.

I BELIEVE IN ONE LORD JESUS CHRIST, THE ONLY BEGOTTEN  
SON OF GOD, BORN OF THE FATHER BEFORE ALL AGES. GOD  
FROM GOD, LIGHT FROM LIGHT, TRUE GOD FROM TRUE GOD,  
BEGOTTEN, NOT MADE, CONSUBSTANTIAL WITH THE FATHER  
THROUGH HIM ALL THINGS WERE MADE. FOR US MEN AND FOR  
OUR SALVATION HE CAME DOWN FROM HEAVEN AND BY THE  
HOLY SPIRIT WAS INCARNATE OF THE VIRGIN MARY  
AND BECAME MAN.

FOR OUR SAKE. HE WAS CRUCIFIED UNDER PONTIUS PILATE, HE  
SUFFERED DEATH AND WAS BURIED, AND ROSE AGAIN ON THE  
THIRD DAY IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE SCRIPTURES. HE AS-  
CENDED INTO HEAVEN AND IS SEATED AT THE RIGHT HAND OF  
THE FATHER. HE WILL COME AGAIN IN GLORY TO JUDGE THE  
LIVING AND THE DEAD AND HIS KINGDOM WILL HAVE NO END.

I BELIEVE IN THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE LORD, THE GIVER OF LIFE,  
WHO PROCEEDS FROM THE FATHER AND THE SON, WHO WITH  
THE FATHER AND THE SON IS ADORED AND GLORIFIED, WHO  
HAS SPOKEN THROUGH THE PROPHETS.

I BELIEVE IN ONE, HOLY, CATHOLIC AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH. I  
CONFESS ONE BAPTISM FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS AND I  
LOOK FORWARD TO THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD AND THE  
LIFE OF THE WORLD TO COME. AMEN.

Lectionary for Mass for Use in the Dioceses of the United States, second typical edition,  
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**Thank you to all who contributed  
in making this Advent Reflection:**

### **God Keeps His Promises:**

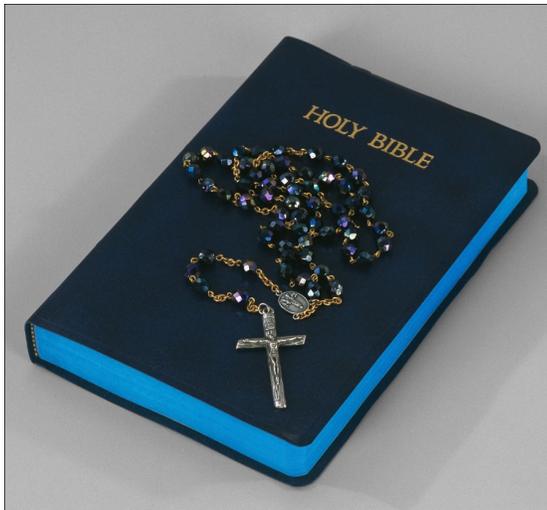
In the early days of knowing that I have MS, I had to struggle with the possibilities of how it might affect my life. The contemplation of any life changing disease or event can be, and often is, a depressing process. For a period of time, I found myself feeling emotionless and empty.

I had not been raised with the Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick as I had become a Catholic as an adult, but, I was at a point where I needed "something". Christ said " Ask and it will be given you." Mt 7:7.

I came to my first anointing asking for the strength to live with this disease and God gave me tears. The tears came for a long time. The next day I woke and, in spite of a large headache, I felt stronger and better than I had in months.

God kept his promise.

MH



### **I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD**

Sunday, December 2

### **First Sunday of Advent**

**Reading 1:**

**Jer 33: 14-16**

**Responsorial Psalm:**

**Ps 25: 4-5, 8-9, 10,14**

**Reading 2:**

**1Thes 3:12-4:2**

**Gospel: Lk 21: 25-28**

Guide me in your truth  
and teach me for you are  
my savior, and for you I  
wait all the day. Psalms  
25:5

I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD

### God Is A God for All People

My daughter calls it "The World Garden", this communal plot behind the Nativity Rectory where we gather at least weekly. We are a diverse crew of first-generation Americans from other corners of the earth, and those of us city-folk who grew up knowing our grandparents and great grandparents as farmers in this land.

The children who come by foot, bike and car might never have heard the word "ploughshare", but they know "shovel, hoe, rake, wheelbarrow." They have seen parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, and siblings take these tools to the land regularly, steadily. They have helped harvest enough pounds of juicy tomatoes and watermelon to feed their own families, and share with others.

This parcel has become a sacred place. Land worked by many hands, many tools. May we continue to teach these children-of-nations the power of these simple tools, the power of relationships, the power of joining hands to tackle a problem together. May this garden be the foundation for them to always be peace-loving people, not taking to the sword or ways of war, but united for the common good.

RMJ

Monday, December 3

**Reading 1: Is 2:1-5**  
**Responsorial Psalm:**  
**Psalms 122: 1-2, 3-4b,**  
**4cd-5, 6-7, 8-9**  
**Gospel:**  
**Matthew 8:5-11**

We pray for peace of Jerusalem! May those who love you prosper! May peace be within your walls, prosperity in your buildings.  
Psalms 122: 6,7



## **I Made You**

One day in early morning at my usual quick few minutes one-on-one with God, I was bringing my grandson, newly diagnosed with cancer, to Him asking to please give my grandson what he needed on this part of his journey. My thoughts wandered as to why my bout of cancer was healed and not his.

From there I knew—in my head—there must be more for me to do on my journey. . . . But what? I struggled yet again. How does one know what the work is we are supposed to do?

Trust surfaced as it always does so I knew I just have to be me, open and aware, and I will be guided in that direction. From there I tried not to go where I find myself so often—"Who am I?" "What am I?" and "I, who have so little, worth so little—what was my work?"

Then I heard Him say to me, not angrily, but assertively, "Are you questioning me, as to what I have made that is of little amount and worthless? I knew you from the very beginning of time and I made you to be living, to do my work while you are here with the gifts I have given you."

From there somehow it became clear to me that no matter how little it might be and, who am I to quantify, it was what God needed from me, the only one who can give it.

I am so grateful as I tell you I now walk forward with certainty these days. The need to know how much I'm worth does not even enter in—in its place lives the all fulfilling unconditional love of the God who made me. EB.

I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD  
THE FATHER ALMIGHTY,

Tuesday, December 4

**First reading:**  
**Isaiah 11: 1-10**  
**Responsorial Psalm:**  
**Psalms 72:1-27-8,**  
**12-13,17**  
**Gospel: Luke 10:21-24**

May your son rule from  
sea to sea, and from  
the river to the ends of  
the earth. Psalms 72:8

I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD,  
THE FATHER ALMIGHTY,

MAKER OF HEAVEN AND  
EARTH,

Wednesday, December 5

**First reading:**  
**Isaiah 25: 6-10**  
**Responsorial Psalm:**  
**Psalm 23: 1-3a,**  
**3b-4, 5,6**  
**Gospel:**  
**Matthew 15: 29-37**

Please guide me on  
right paths for your  
name sake. Give me  
courage. Have only  
goodness and  
kindness follow me all  
the days of my life;  
and I shall dwell in the  
house of the Lord for  
years to come. Psalms  
23: 3, 4d, 6

## The Lord Provides In Our Time of Need:

It was July when our little son died at birth. As was the custom, the Sisters took him away before we had a chance to hold him and say our good-byes. We were given a picture of him to remember him, but never got to mourn his death.

Years later when our daughter died, the Lord opened our hearts to be able to mourn both of our children. With the Lord's help we have been able to go on with our lives. Thank you Jesus.

AL.



**"When the flood sirens blew I knew I wanted to do something to help."**

Two businessmen from Fargo went to the parking lot of the Walmart in Minot where people that had lost their homes were gathering. There they handed out envelopes containing money to people. One woman told them, "I do not need this money, but I do know of a family that does have a need for this, and I will ensure it gets to them." It didn't seem like enough.

When the Black Eyed Peas benefit concert was secured, the men bought dozens of tickets. They handed out envelopes with the concert tickets and some cash to residents of the city, so they could go and enjoy an evening of fun.

Recently the men bought dozens of tickets to the Minot Hostfest. They gave them to the Ramstad school staff. Here is what one recipient of the tickets had to say:

"Thank you so much for the tickets to Hostfest. Our home and business were flooded in the 2011 flood in Minot, so we did not get to attend last year. Ramstad, the school I work at, was also flooded. 2011 was devastating to me personally on several levels, so I completely enjoyed attending the Hostfest this year. I have always realized that the world is filled with many wonderful people but to experience so much kindness from so many people is very overwhelming. We hope to be moving out of the FEMA trailer and into our house in a month or so. Thank you again for your thoughtfulness."

CB

I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD,  
THE FATHER ALMIGHTY,  
MAKER OF HEAVEN AND  
EARTH,

OF ALL THINGS VISIBLE  
AND INVISIBLE.

Thursday, December 6

**First Reading:**  
**Isaiah 26:1-6**  
**Responsorial Psalms:**  
**Psalms 118:1 & 8-9,**  
**19-21,25-27a**  
**Gospel:**  
**Matthew 7:21,24-27**

O Lord grant salvation!  
O Lord, grant prosperity!  
Blessed is he who comes in  
the name of the Lord. Give  
thanks to the Lord for  
he is good. His kindness  
endures forever.  
Psalms 118: 25, 26, 29

I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD, THE  
FATHER ALMIGHTY, MAKER  
OF HEAVEN AND EARTH,

OF ALL THINGS VISIBLE  
AND INVISIBLE.

Memorial of St. Am-  
brose,  
Bishop & Doctor  
of the Church

Friday, December 7

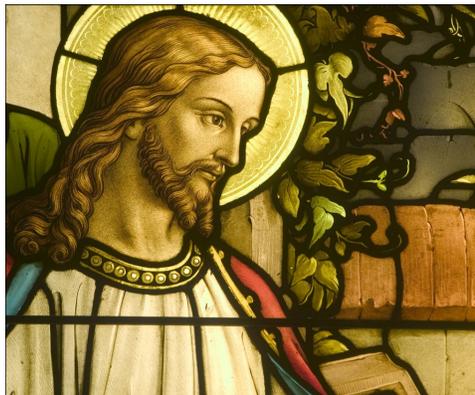
**First Reading:**  
**Isaiah 29: 17-24**  
**Responsorial Psalm:**  
**Psalms 27: 1,4,13-14**  
**Gospel**  
**Matthew 9:27-31**

One thing I ask of the  
Lord; this I seek: To  
dwell in the house of  
the Lord all the days of  
my life. Psalms 27: 4

## "I Love You, God"

I remained in the pew after most of the other parishioners had gone. As I prayed, I spontaneously whispered, "I love you, God." Just as suddenly I felt an invisible force come straight from the altar and directly into my soul.

I momentarily was stunned and astonished. God, who knows all things, reacted when I verbalized directly to Him that I loved Him. Although I had told others that I loved God, I realized that our omniscience God likes us to tell Him too. This was my "Ah Hah" moment, a slight few seconds that reminded me that just as God's creatures want to hear that they are loved, our all-knowing God, too, wants us to tell Him. SG



## "Hang In There"

At our pregnancy ultrasound, I expected to fall in love with the baby's cartoonish profile and to anticipate holding little hands and kissing little feet. However, seeing that tiny heart beating--a functioning organ inside a moving human being inside my own body--impacted me more than I had predicted. Previously, the life growing within me had not seemed tangible; but at that minute, the magnitude of God's gift became much clearer. I felt not only extreme gratitude for this blessing, but also great sorrow for those who don't recognize this as LIFE. With that ultrasound picture, I imagined God telling us, "Hang in there, for no matter how anxious and uncertain you are about the future, I have a wonderful plan!" God had chosen us to raise His beloved child--he must have faith in us. We must be faithful enough to accept and follow His will in return.

JS



I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD,  
THE FATHER ALMIGHTY,  
MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH,

OF ALL THINGS VISIBLE AND  
INVISIBLE.

Solemnity of the  
Immaculate Conception  
of the Blessed Virgin  
Mary.

Saturday, December 8

**First Reading:**

**Genesis 2:9-15,20**

**Responsorial Psalm:**

**Psalms 98: 1,2-3ab,**

**3cd-4**

**Gospel: Luke 1: 26-38**

Sing to the Lord a new  
song for he has done  
marvelous deeds.

Psalms 98:1

I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD,  
THE FATHER ALMIGHTY,  
MAKER OF HEAVEN AND  
EARTH,  
OF ALL THINGS VISIBLE  
AND INVISIBLE.

I BELIEVE IN ONE LORD  
JESUS CHRIST,

Sunday, December 9

## **Second Sunday of Advent**

**First Reading Bar 5:1-9**

**Responsorial Psalm:**

**Psalms 126: 1-2,  
2-3, 4-5,6**

**Second Reading:**

**Phil. 1: 4-6, 8-11**

**Gospel: Luke 3: 1-6**

The Lord has done great  
things for us.

Psalms 126: 3

## **God Put You Where You Were Meant to be**

My family and I started our journey in Fargo more than 10 years ago. I arrived here with a newborn and two things on my mind. "How was I going to be able to cope without the closeness of my family and where will I have my baby baptized?" I found Nativity because of the two roads that intersect close by. I knew where those roads were. I remember coming to Nativity with my son and instantly feeling welcomed. Somehow I found the courage to join the Tuesday Faith Formation of moms and I felt at home for the first time. At one of those gatherings, I heard the words that made me pause and rethink my insecurities. All the ladies agreed, "God put you where you were meant to be".

Now, more than 10 years later, I have put my talent into God's hands and become an active member in Nativity's parish. I am indeed where I was meant to be. Again, my courage was brought to a head when I decided to participate in Christ Renews His Parish. For the second time in my life, I felt God's presence and His loving arms surround me. I can see His work in the parish, at service, and at the Catholic schools. My children know God and love Him.

I believe that God guided me here. I believe that God opened my heart to try something new. I firmly believe that God gave me talents that can be used at Nativity and in His name. My parish family has become as dear to me as my own. I thank God many times for the courage I didn't know I had to go into the unknown. I find comfort knowing that God is in charge and wherever he leads me I will find home.

AP

**“Angel of God, my guardian dear. . .”**

I assure you it was a typical day over two decades ago. Nothing special, nothing out of the ordinary. Chores and errands were the order of the day, including a stop at the local dry cleaner, a trip repeated countless times over the years. After pulling out of the lot, I continued down a side street to a four-way stop. No coast and roll for me, I came to a full stop, as usual, and checked for traffic. Just as I was getting ready to step on the accelerator, a voice of undeniable authority spoke surely and distinctly to me: “Don’t go,” and I didn’t. At that moment, a car appeared on the cross street, barreling up to the intersection. Again, nothing alarming, for how many times have we seen a car race to a stop sign and come to a sudden halt? Not this time. . .

The driver didn’t punch the breaks for a quick stop, but continued on roaring through the intersection. If I had proceeded, which would have been the reasonable thing to do, I would have been killed, along with my unborn child. I stared in stunned silence. There was, no doubt about the source of that voice.

Sweet angel may you continue to light, to guard, to rule, to guide.

AMEN

DG



I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD,  
THE FATHER ALMIGHTY,  
MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH,  
OF ALL THINGS VISIBLE  
AND INVISIBLE. I BELIEVE IN ONE  
LORD JESUS CHRIST,

THE ONLY BEGOTTEN  
SON OF GOD

Monday, December 10

**First Reading:**

**Isaiah 35-1-10**

**Responsorial Psalm:**

**Psalms 85: 9ab &10,**

**11-12, 13-14**

**Gospel: Luke 5: 17-26**

I will hear what God  
proclaims; the Lord—for  
he proclaims peace to his  
people. Psalms 85: 9

I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD,  
THE FATHER ALMIGHTY,  
MAKER OF HEAVEN AND  
EARTH, OF ALL THINGS  
VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE.

I BELIEVE IN ONE LORD JESUS  
CHRIST, THE ONLY BEGOTTEN  
SON OF GOD,

BORN OF THE FATHER  
BEFORE ALL AGES.

Tuesday, December 11

**First Reading:**  
**Isaiah 40:1-11**  
**Responsorial Psalm:**  
**Psalms 96: 1-2,3 &**  
**10ac, 11-12,13**  
**Gospel:**  
**Matthew 18: 12-14**

Let the heavens be  
glad and the earth  
rejoice. Psalms 96: 11

## Two Lost Souls

I recall with great joy, the birth of our first child,-a son. We weren't sure we could have children and then the pregnancy itself was difficult, leading the doctor to recommend complete bed rest in the final weeks. With the birth of a healthy child, I celebrated with a steak and eggs breakfast and eagerly called family with the happy news.

Some time later I took a part-time job as a security guard to help pay bills while working on my master's degree. Each night after work I would return to our apartment around 10:30 p.m. My 2 year old son would be waiting to greet me enthusiastically and we'd snack on peanut butter, graham crackers and chocolate milk.

As he grew older, we'd enjoy throwing the football together, following our favorite sports teams and laughing together as we made up silly names for professional sports teams, e.g., the Dangerous Denver Dinosaurs.

Things gradually changed in junior high and high school as our son began to question and seemingly reject all the values we had so carefully tried to instill in him and live out in our family life.

This all culminated when he was almost 18 and I discovered that he had been sneaking out through the window of his basement room each night. Frustrated, hurt and angry, I told him to find a different place to live.

Soon after, he began college where he lived in a dorm. Although it was within minutes of our home, he seldom came by. I missed my son but didn't know how to restore the relationship. However, I did know that young men liked to eat so I decided to invite him out to lunch,

**Continued on inside back cover**

## Seeing God Work in My Life

I grew up in a family of three girls. We were a close family and even as adults we still celebrated birthdays together. It was in September of 1974 that my parents and my family went to my older sister's house for the weekend to celebrate a birthday. We thought it was odd that my younger sister hadn't called during the weekend with Happy Birthday wishes. What we didn't know was that she had been murdered that Thursday evening. We left my older sister's home Sunday only to be called back Monday morning. My older sister had a house fire that destroyed everything in their home. We had to return to retrieve her 1 and 3 year old children to stay with their grandparents. We started to frantically call my younger sister (in the town in Florida where she had just moved) to tell her about the fire. After trying to reach her day and night, we finally heard on the third day. The police and the pastor drove out to the farm to tell my mother (who was alone with the grandkids) what had happened to my sister. To this day, I'm convinced that the only reason my Mom didn't lose her mind was because she was responsible for the grandkids.

That was the first time my spiritual eyes were opened to see God work in my life. It was because of the "coincidence" of having two tragedies happen within days to a family that had never had any. And, the fact that because of the delay in contacting my younger sister, we knew something was wrong. All this helped cushion the blow of the final shock.

Even through my grief, I was able to see that God didn't cause this, but that Satan had worked through someone else. I could also see that God was there to comfort us. It was the beginning of being aware of God in my life.

SC

I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD,  
THE FATHER ALMIGHTY,  
MAKER OF HEAVEN AND EARTH,  
OF ALL THINGS VISIBLE  
AND INVISIBLE.

I BELIEVE IN ONE LORD JESUS  
CHRIST, THE ONLY BEGOTTEN  
SON OF GOD, BORN OF THE  
FATHER BEFORE ALL AGES.

GOD FROM GOD,

The Feast of our Lady of  
Guadalupe

Wednesday, December 12

**First Reading:**

**Zec. 2:14-17**

**Responsorial Psalm:**

**Judith 13: 18bcde, 19**

**Gospel: Luke 1:39-47**

Your deed of hope will never be forgotten by those who tell of the might of God.  
Judith 13: 19

I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD,  
THE FATHER ALMIGHTY,  
MAKER OF HEAVEN AND  
EARTH, OF ALL THINGS  
VISIBLE  
AND INVISIBLE.

I BELIEVE IN ONE  
LORD JESUS CHRIST,  
THE ONLY BEGOTTEN  
SON OF GOD, BORN OF THE  
FATHER BEFORE ALL AG-  
ES. GOD FROM GOD,

LIGHT FROM LIGHT

Memorial of St. Lucy,  
Virgin and Martyr

Thursday, December 13

**First Reading:**  
**Isaiah 41: 13-20**  
**Responsorial Psalm:**  
**Psalms: 145: 1 & 9,**  
**10-11, 12-13ab**  
**Gospel:**  
**Matthew 11:11-15**

Let all your works give  
you thanks, O Lord.  
Psalms 145:10

## **Let God Live Within You and Guide You. . .**

I have always believed that God cares for those in need who trust in him and pray for his guidance along the pathway of life. I am an octogenarian and have faced many challenges, some life-threatening, some emotional, as I ventured through my 80 some years on God's green earth. Often, quick reaction and God's saving grace prevailed and another day dawned for me.

Many of us today face our own special needs and pray for God's favor on our own behalf. This brings me to one of the lessons learned as a youngster in parochial school. Let God live within you and guide you and your pathway will be smooth.  
LM



## Patience and Calm

Have you ever been asked by a family member, sibling, parent, spouse, child, or others to do something for them that you can do and have done many times before, and you agree to do it? Your agreement is against your better judgment, because the person asking has, in the past, always seemed to interfere in the work once you start. But, you know the work has to be done and the person asking really needs your help.

You start the work. Then the person comes around and tells you that you have not done certain things yet. You are told that the work you have done is not right. You are told how you should be doing the work. The person returns many times, always complaining about you and the work until you are ready to scream.

You become very angry inside. You did not ask to do this work in the first place. You are ready to use bad language and start at least a verbal fight with this person.

Suddenly a mysterious peace and calm comes over you. Your muscles relax and some voice from somewhere tells you to just go along with the flow. You can change whatever you are doing and do what the person wants done in the way and order they want even if it is wrong, more time consuming, and expensive. But you feel anger coming back and wonder why you can't just scream at the person and walk away in anger and a huff.

Then again this mysterious calm and peace comes over you and speaks to you about how wonderful is our God that he has a place in his Heaven for all persons. He has a place for this person and a place

**Continued on the inside back cover**

I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD,  
THE FATHER ALMIGHTY,  
MAKER OF HEAVEN AND  
EARTH, OF ALL THINGS  
VISIBLE  
AND INVISIBLE.

I BELIEVE IN ONE  
LORD JESUS CHRIST,  
THE ONLY BEGOTTEN  
SON OF GOD, BORN OF THE  
FATHER BEFORE ALL  
AGES. GOD FROM GOD,

LIGHT FROM LIGHT

Memorial of St. John  
of the Cross,  
priest and doctor  
of the Church

Friday, December 14

**First Reading:**

**Isaiah 48: 17-19**

**Responsorial Psalm:**

**Psalms 1: 1-2,3,4,&6**

**Gospel:**

**Matthew 11: 16-19**

Meditate on his law  
day and night.  
Psalms 1: 2

I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD,  
THE FATHER ALMIGHTY,  
MAKER OF HEAVEN AND  
EARTH, OF ALL THINGS  
VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE.

I BELIEVE IN ONE LORD JESUS  
CHRIST, THE ONLY BEGOTTEN  
SON OF GOD, BORN OF THE  
FATHER BEFORE ALL AGES.  
GOD FROM GOD, LIGHT FROM  
LIGHT,

TRUE GOD FROM  
TRUE GOD,

Saturday, December 15

**First Reading:**  
**Sirach 48: 1-4,9-11**  
**Responsorial Psalm:**  
**Psalms 80:2ac, & 3b,**  
**15-16, 18-19**  
**Gospel:**  
**Matthew 17: 9a,10-13**

Give us new life and  
we will call upon your  
name. Psalms 80: 19b

## **Preparing the People for the Call of Jesus**

My choice for someone who reminded me of John the Baptist or the prophet Elijah is Father Maurice Mueller, the third pastor of Nativity Parish. He and I served in the priesthood for almost 50 years. We were together for three years as Assistant Pastors in Jamestown and over 10 years as fellow pastors in Fargo (Nativity and St. Mary's respectively.) We vacationed together and kept in close contact when we had different assignments.

We were conscious of the priesthood we shared in Christ, striving always to serve the People of God after the example of Jesus.

Fr. Mueller had a gentleness and humor, together with fidelity to the Word of God and the guidance of the Church. He understood and respected the needs and limitations of those with whom he worked and served. He listened to the voice of Jesus and the Church. Like John the Baptist he prepared people for the call of Jesus and he communicated the message of God like the prophet Elijah. AN

## He is God With Us

Years ago as an older than average student I returned to school. I encountered two students that affected my life in ways they never knew. The first person was a new student who was always a step behind the others. He looked lost, afraid and unsure of himself. His outward appearance was my internal appearance. My life was in transition. I felt like I did not belong, a step behind, afraid and unsure of my self.

The second person presented as calm, and even tempered, with nothing bothering him. I was attracted to his peaceful, calm manner and how he was able to live for today. This was something I wanted. Later I found out he had been a Trappist monk for a number of years, which may have been the reason for his calm manner.

Both of these men showed me Christ. The first man was helped by his friends by including him in their activities. The second man gave me hope. God is present in every creature and bends low in love for us. He is God with us. I thank both men for being present to me at a time I was in need.

DK

I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD,  
THE FATHER ALMIGHTY,  
MAKER OF HEAVEN AND  
EARTH, OF ALL THINGS  
VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE.

I BELIEVE IN ONE LORD JESUS  
CHRIST, THE ONLY BEGOTTEN  
SON OF GOD, BORN OF THE  
FATHER BEFORE ALL AGES.  
GOD FROM GOD, LIGHT FROM  
LIGHT, TRUE GOD FROM  
TRUE GOD,

BEGOTTEN, NOT MADE,  
CONSUBSTANTIAL WITH  
THE FATHER;

Sunday, December 16

## Third Sunday of Advent

**First Reading:**

**Zeph 3: 14-18a**

**Responsorial Psalm:**

**Isaiah 12: 2-3, 4, 5-6**

**Second Reading:**

**Phil 4: 4-7**

**Gospel: Luke 3: 10-18**

God indeed is my  
savior. I am confident  
and unafraid.  
Isaiah 12: 2a

I BELIEVE IN ONE GOD,  
THE FATHER ALMIGHTY,  
MAKER OF HEAVEN AND  
EARTH, OF ALL THINGS  
VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE.

I BELIEVE IN ONE LORD  
JESUS CHRIST, THE ONLY  
BEGOTTEN SON OF GOD,  
BORN OF THE FATHER  
BEFORE ALL AGES.  
GOD FROM GOD,  
LIGHT FROM LIGHT,  
TRUE GOD FROM  
TRUE GOD, BEGOTTEN,  
NOT MADE,  
CONSUBSTANTIAL WITH  
THE FATHER;

THROUGH HIM ALL THINGS  
WERE MADE.

Monday, December 17

**First Reading:**  
**Gn 49: 2, 8-10**  
**Responsorial Psalm:**  
**Ps 72: 1-2, 3-4ab, 7-8**  
**Gospel:**  
**Matthew 1: 1-17**

Justice shall flower in  
his days, and  
profound peace, till  
the moon be no  
more. Psalms 72: 7

## **The Faith of Our Ancestors**

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures; he leads me beside still waters". Psalms 23: 1-2

These are the roots of my ancestors—farmers always tilling the earth, living off the fruits of their labors from the harvest of the land. They were tending their animals and caring for the gifts of God given to them to protect and nurture.

They came from Germany in the year 1887. All other family members were left behind—almost certainly they would never see them again. They already had several children die of starvation. They had to listen to the word of God in their hearts which guided them to the new land. They settled and homesteaded in North Dakota.

My parents were of this sturdy stock, and I am blessed to have been born into the family. God was their guide. Sunday Mass was not missed, except when impossible to attend. Rosary during Lent was daily. We grew to love and believe in our Catholic faith and teachings. Thanks be to God for their faithful following of our Lord Jesus Christ. HLS

## **The Importance of Fathers to the family**

This will be the first Christmas without my father. He passed away this past spring at the age of 86. He had been diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease shortly after my mom passed away several years ago. I miss him very much but am so thankful for being blessed with such a kind, loving man I had the privilege to call "Dad."

Looking back on my dad's life, I realize now more than ever what a wonderful role model he was. He was a proud WWII and Korean War veteran, had a long career he loved and a strong faith in God. He also loved and cherished his family. The last several years Dad resided in assisted living and the last few months in the nursing home. When I or any family member came to visit his face lit up and we always ended visits with hugs and "I love you."

Dad taught me things even as his dementia progressed the last few years. There were fewer activities he could participate in, but he really enjoyed going for a car ride or simply sitting outside on a beautiful day. He would notice the simplest things in nature. He loved looking at the sky, cloud formations, trees, birds and things most of us don't really pay attention to in our fast paced lives. Dad lived in the moment, and I now realize what grace there is in living this way. There are no regrets from yesterday or worries about what tomorrow may bring. Thanks Dad for everything.

JS

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I BELIEVE IN ONE LORD  
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BORN OF THE FATHER  
BEFORE ALL AGES.  
GOD FROM GOD,  
LIGHT FROM LIGHT,  
TRUE GOD FROM  
TRUE GOD, BEGOTTEN,  
NOT MADE,  
CONSUBSTANTIAL WITH  
THE FATHER; THROUGH  
HIM ALL THINGS WERE MADE.

FOR US MEN

Tuesday, December 18

**First Reading:**  
**Jer 23: 5-8**  
**Responsorial Psalm:**  
**Ps 72: 1-2, 12-13,**  
**18-19**  
**Gospel:**  
**Matthew 1: 18-25**

Blessed be the Lord  
God of Israel who alone  
does wondrous deeds.  
Psalms 72: 18

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AND FOR OUR  
SALVATION

Wednesday, December 19

**First Reading:**  
**Judges 13: 2-7,**  
**24-25a**  
**Responsorial Psalm:**  
**Ps 71: 3-4a,**  
**5-6ab, 16,17**  
**Gospel: Luke 1: 5-25**

O God, you have  
taught me from my  
youth, and 'til the  
present I proclaim  
your wondrous  
deeds; Psalms 71: 17

## **A Story of Trusting God**

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart" has always been a favorite verse of mine in times of trouble. It was when my younger sister, at the age of 45, was diagnosed with a brain tumor that this verse really helped me through some very dark days.

Not knowing if she would survive, my family and I put our trust in God as she went through radiation and chemotherapy. By the grace of God she came through surgery and treatment and is now a living testimony to His healing touch.

This August she will celebrate seven years of being cancer free.

PC



## "The Only Begotten Son of God"

"Sometimes our faith life is too hard to describe with words, and that's where prayer can help." (Carmelite Daily Disconnect for 8-23-2012) When the days get long, lonely, and redundant, that is the time I know that I can reach out to our Father in prayer and find the friendship that, during those lonely times, I long for. To sit and meditate on the glory of our Maker and all that He has created is at times overwhelming yet reassuring. The broad expanse of Heaven and the wonders we have and experience here on earth fill my heart with songs of praise and worship to our King of Kings. Jesus lives in my heart and I meet Him every day that I am able to partake of the Holy Eucharist. Peace and joy fill my heart because I know that God, above all, loves me like no one else can.

Being a child of Christ, the Only Begotten Son of God, I know His presence in my heart. The mere fact is that I can call out to Him at any time, that he will come and fill my heart with joy and thanksgiving. He is visible in the things we know such as our children and grandchildren, and he is invisible, living in our hearts. He, Jesus, is the only Begotten Son of God, and one day I shall have the privilege of joining Him in heaven in eternal Glory. If the simple pleasures we experience here on earth are wonderful, how great shall it be when we are called to our reward in heaven. "Glory Be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit." Let the song in your heart sing out God's praise as we live in hope of His Glory. Hallelujah!

TT

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US MEN AND FOR OUR  
SALVATION

HE CAME DOWN FROM  
HEAVEN

Thursday, December 20

**First Reading:**  
**Isaiah 7: 10-14**  
**Responsorial Psalm:**  
**Psalm 24: 1-2,**  
**3-4ab, 5-6**  
**Gospel: Luke 1: 26-38**

He shall receive a  
blessing from the  
Lord, a reward  
from God his savior.  
Psalms 24:5

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MADE. FOR US MEN AND  
FOR OUR SALVATION  
HE CAME DOWN FROM  
HEAVEN AND

BY THE HOLY SPIRIT  
WAS INCARNATE OF  
THE VIRGIN MARY

Friday, December 21

**First Reading:**  
**Sg 2: 8-14 or**  
**Zep 3:14-18a**  
**Responsorial Psalm:**  
**Psalm 33: 2-3,**  
**11-12, 20-21**  
**Gospel:**  
**Luke 1: 39-45**

But the plan of the  
Lord stands forever;  
the design of his  
heart, through all  
generations. Psalms  
33: 11

## **Life, the Sacred Gift**

The plan of the Lord was for the Word to become flesh and dwell among us. This plan depended on the cooperation of a woman; a chosen, faithful woman, full of grace. Grace is the "free and undeserved help that God gives us. . ." (CCC1996)

I had the privilege of being a chaperone when my daughter's class went to the abortion clinic to pray during 40 days for life. These boys and girls stood as strong examples of God's grace by publicly praying the Rosary, shedding a few tears, and even enduring a little ridicule. Their presence acknowledged the understanding that if a woman's womb was the chosen dwelling sacred enough to begin the life of God's gift of our salvation, we, as Christians, have the responsibility to respect and defend all life.

"If all knees should bend in front of the Savior, all heads should bow in front of His mother." Alice Von Hildebrand

SK



## **Finding Thankfulness and Gratitude**

Imagine sitting with your husband of 19 years and hearing he has stage IV cancer with a 20% chance of surviving and the treatment may lead to the loss of his voice and the need for a permanent feeding tube. In that moment, time stands still. People and things move in slow motion and it's hard to breathe. Under the weight of this burden, how does one's heart find gratitude and thankfulness? For me, my strength came from my faith, my family, and my friends. My faith was nourished through Bible study, prayer and receiving the Sacraments. God's word spoke to me in ways I have never heard before. Jesus words in Matthew, "Come to me all who are weary and I will give you rest," gave me comfort and peace. Through prayer and the nourishment of the Eucharist, I was able to make a choice to find the positive in life, write it down, and look for things to be thankful for. My husband's illness profoundly affected my life. I became mindful of the little things in life. I embraced the beauty of God's creation and no longer took things for granted. I have a deeper empathy for the suffering of others.

God blessed me by placing special family and friends in my life. Their love and support lifted me up in the most difficult of time. A practical way for me to focus on gratitude was to make a list of things I was thankful for each day. The negative emotions were replaced by positive thoughts. I was able to see the blessings in each day. This wasn't always easy and there have been more challenges along the way. I have been humbled each time but God's gentle

**Continued on the Inside back Cover**

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FOR US MEN AND FOR OUR  
SALVATION HE CAME DOWN  
FROM HEAVEN, AND BY THE  
HOLY SPIRIT WAS  
INCARNATE OF THE  
VIRGIN MARY

AND BECAME MAN.

Saturday, December 22

**First Reading:**

**1Sm 1:24-28**

**Responsorial Psalm:**

**1Sm 2:1, 4-5, 6-7,**

**8abcd**

**Gospel: Lk 1: 46-56**

The Lord makes poor  
and makes rich, he  
humbles and he also  
exalts.

1 Samuel 2: 7

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MAN.

FOR OUR SAKE.

Sunday, December 23

## **Fourth Sunday of Advent**

**First Reading:**

**Mi 5:1-4a**

**Responsorial Psalm:**

**Ps 80: 2-3, 15-16,  
18-19**

**Second Reading:**

**Heb 10: 5-10**

**Gospel: Lk 1:39-45**

O Lord of hosts,  
restore us; if your face  
shine upon us, then  
we shall be safe.

Psalms 80: 4

## **In God's Time**

Fourteen hours after our fourth son, David, was born, we were surprised to learn he had Down syndrome. We were not prepared for this news and we were scared by the unknown. What does having Down syndrome mean? Since his birth five and half months ago, we have learned much about Down syndrome and the fear of the unknown is slowly being replaced with knowledge about how we can help our son grow and thrive.

As with our other children, I do not know what David's future holds, but the diagnosis of Down syndrome makes it harder for me to trust God's plan. And yet, I have no other choice, I must trust God completely and wait for Him to reveal His plan. On the morning of David's baptism, when he was 8 weeks old, I was inspired to write this poem:

One boy, two boys, three boys, four  
God made me with chromosome more  
God made me different than my brothers  
three

They are more alike than different from me  
God made me different from the start  
He knew I would melt my momma's heart  
God made me with ten fingers, ten toes,  
A smile, blue eyes and a cute button nose  
God gave me special gifts I am told  
His plan will take a lifetime to unfold  
One boy, two boys, three boys, four  
My momma could not love us more!

MS

## Waiting

When Fr. Tim asked, "Will you accept children lovingly from God?" on our wedding day in August of 2000, Mike and I both enthusiastically answered, "Yes." However, the road to parenthood took longer than we expected...

After an early miscarriage, I became pregnant again, and with excitement we awaited the birth of our child. On Good Friday of 2004, when I was 35 weeks along, I no longer felt the baby move. The next day, we found out that our child had died. Catherine was stillborn on April 12. We held our precious daughter in our arms and then were embraced by our family, friends, and community as we mourned the loss of our sweet baby girl.

Over a year later, I was finally pregnant again! During those months, we were nervous, yet hopeful. We felt the prayers, love, and support of those around us as we eagerly awaited the arrival of our child. On March 21, 2006, our son, Joseph Paul, was born. He was a healthy 7 pound boy! We were thrilled! At last, our prayers were answered and we began the next chapter of our lives as parents. MF



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Monday, December 24

**First Reading: 2Sm 7:1-5,  
8b-12, 14a, 16**

**Responsorial Psalm:**

**Ps 89:2-3, 4-5, 27 and 29**

**Gospel: Lk 1:67-79**

The favors of the  
Lord I will sing  
forever; through all  
generations my mouth  
shall proclaim your  
faithfulness. Psalms 89: 2

### Luke 2: 1-14

In those days a decree went out from Caesar Augustus  
that the whole world should be enrolled.

This was the first enrollment,  
when Quirinius was governor of Syria.  
So all went to be enrolled, each to his own town.  
And Joseph too went up from Galilee from the town of  
Nazareth  
to Judea, to the city of David that is called Bethlehem,  
because he was of the house and family of David,  
to be enrolled with Mary, his betrothed, who was with  
child.

While they were there,  
the time came for her to have her child,  
and she gave birth to her firstborn son.  
She wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a  
manger,  
because there was no room for them in the inn.

Now there were shepherds in that region living in the fields  
and keeping the night watch over their flock.

The angel of the Lord appeared to them  
and the glory of the Lord shone around them,  
and they were struck with great fear.

The angel said to them,

"Do not be afraid;

for behold, I proclaim to you good news of great joy  
that will be for all the people.

For today in the city of David  
a savior has been born for you who is Christ and Lord.

And this will be a sign for you:  
you will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes  
and lying in a manger."

And suddenly there was a multitude of the heavenly host  
with the angel,

praising God and saying:

"Glory to God in the highest  
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests."

### **Two Lost Souls (Cont.)**

once a month, just the two of us. He eagerly agreed and this became a wonderful, connecting and healing encounter for each of us over the following years.

Now years later, I cannot be prouder of my son, who is a loving, patient husband and father, who regularly calls home to keep us posted on his life.

When, as a young husband, he himself faced cancer surgery, he shared that the expected birth of his first child gave him courage to face his ordeal. "I just can't wait to meet this young person with whom I'll share so much over the years."

My son and I were both lost. Love led us home! PAE

### **Patience and Calm (Cont.)**

for you; that this is just part of God's plan.

Each person is given the opportunity to help others and, therefore, help himself or herself get to heaven by learning patience, humility and the greatest of these, love. You realize you have been given the opportunity to wash this person's feet. DC

### **Finding Thanksgiving and Gratitude (Cont.)**

voice nudges me again to be grateful and look for the blessings. When I look for it, I find joy amidst the suffering. God has blessed our marriage with 13 more years. CJP

## Nativity Advent and Christmas Schedule



**YEAR OF FAITH** 2012  
2013

### **Eucharistic Liturgies:**

Saturday: 8:00 am 5:00 pm

Sunday: 7:45 am, 9:15 am & 11:00 am

Monday through Friday 8:00 am

### **Sacrament of Reconciliation:**

Individual: 3:30 pm—4:30 pm Saturdays

Communal Reconciliation:

Dec. 20 @ 7:00 pm

Also, by appointment

(See bulletin for more information)

### **Eucharistic Communal Adoration:**

Monday: 8:30 am to 10:30 pm

Tuesday: 4:00 am to 7:30 am

**Rosary:** Monday—Friday, 8:35 am

### **Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

Dec. 7: Vigil: 6:30 pm

Dec. 8: 8:00 am

### **Christmas and New Year's Liturgies**

Dec. 24: 4:00 pm

Mass in the Midnight: 10:30 pm

Dec. 25: 9:15 am & 11:00 am

Dec. 31: Vigil 5:00 pm

Jan. 1: 10:00 am

**MACH 1:** Advent by Candlelight Nov. 29

**Awe, Power and Praise (APP)** Dec. 5, 6:45 pm

**Nativity School Advent Program:** Dec. 6, 7:00 pm

**St. Nicholas Collection:** Donation of personal care items through  
Advent to be given to Nokomis Childcare

**Rite of Acceptance/Rite of Welcome** Dec. 9 at 11:00 liturgy

**Los Posadas (Nativity School):** Dec. 20

**Christmas Party:** Dec. 24 with serving beginning at 6:00 pm

**Children's Christmas Musical:** *"In a Galilee Far, Far Away,"*  
Saturday, January 5, 2013 at 7:00 pm



**Nativity Church of Fargo**

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