



*Hark!*

*The herald angels sing,  
Glory to the newborn king  
Joyful all ye nations rise  
Join the triumph of the skies*

God, our creator, we offer this humble prayer during the Christmas season, that we may share in the song of the angels, the gladness of the shepherds, and the worship of the wise men. We pray for joy in our hearts, hope in our God, love to forgive, and peace upon the earth.

Jesus, Light of the World, as we celebrate your birth may we begin to see the world in the light of understanding you have bestowed upon us.

Amen.

~ Adapted from Fairchild - Stevenson - Willetts

Weekly Update - December 16, 2021

# Pope Francis: *Prepare for Christmas by Serving Others*

~by Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) - With Christmas just over a week away, Christians should prepare for Jesus' birth by serving those in need rather than focusing on what awaits them under the Christmas tree, Pope Francis said.

"We are so busy with all the preparations, with gifts and things that pass," the Pope said. "But let's ask ourselves what we should do for Jesus and for others. What should we do?"

In his address, the Pope reflected on the Gospel reading from St. Luke which recalled the crowds of people who, after being moved by St. John the Baptist's preaching ask him, "What should we do?"

Their question "does not stem from a sense of duty" but from their hearts being "touched by the Lord," and their being enthusiastic for his coming.



St. Luke's Gospel, the Pope added, also encourages one to ask, "What should I do with my life? What am I called to? What will I become?"

By suggesting this question, the Gospel reminds us of something important: Life has a task for us. Life is not meaningless; it is not left up to chance. No! It is a gift the Lord grants us, saying to us: Discover who you are, and work hard to make the dream that is your life come true!"

The Pope encouraged Christians to prepare for Christmas by continuously asking God what should they do for themselves and others in order to contribute to the good of the church and society.

St. John the Baptist's answers, he said, responded to each individual in a way that fit his or her situation in life, a reminder from the Gospel that "life is incarnated" in concrete situations.

"Faith is not an abstract theory, a generalized theory: no!" he said. "Faith touches us personally and transforms each of our lives. Is my faith abstract or concrete? Does it lead me to serve others, to help out?"

Pope Francis said there are several ways people can serve others during Advent, including by doing "something concrete, even if it is small to help others," especially by visiting the lonely, the elderly, the sick, or someone in need.

"Brothers and sisters," he said, "let's find something concrete and do it!"

# Cabrini Outreach Wins Award



Sharon Sherwood (l.), Chief of Mental Health and Cabrini Outreach and Tracey Cabrie, General Manager, Cabrini Outreach accept the award.

We are thrilled to announce the Cabrini Asylum Seeker and Refugee Hub in Malvern, Australia has won the Victorian Multicultural Commission Awards for Excellence in the Health category.

The judges noted the Hub addresses a “pressing unfunded gap in primary healthcare and specialist mental health services for people of all cultures, faiths and ethnicities seeking asylum”.

They also made mention that our services were free, and included culturally and linguistically sensitive primary nurse-led care, specialized mental health support and engagement to access welfare and supports.

~ submitted by Julie Fleming, Cabrini Health

## Sing for JOY

We hope this one hour concert from Cabrini Australia will bring you all Christmas joy and hope. This is the first time our 30 voice strong choir has been able to sing all together for nearly two years because of COVID-19. Small groups have gathered according to distancing guidelines and to maintain a presence outside of rooms. We started weekly Mass again for patients and staff only as we are still restricted to no visitors to our hospitals.



We live-streamed the carols to Patient TV Channels across two hospitals and various care facilities in our local area on Facebook. We can replay it in our foyer TVs across all our sites. The choir video is now on Vimeo. [To view the concert video please click here](#)

The Cabrini Choir was started by Sr. Irma Lunghi, MSC more than 25 years ago encouraging staff and volunteers to see and use their talents as musical ministry. Singing at most of our events the Cabrini Choir always adds an angelic lift to our celebrations. ~ submitted by Julie Fleming





## The CLM Corner



*This is an occasional feature in which we highlight the Cabrini Lay Missionaries, their activities, and ministries.*

December 12<sup>th</sup> was such a special day. It was not only the Third Sunday of Advent but it was also the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, our Province Feast. The Cabrini Lay Missionaries (CLMs) wanted to do something special for the Feast Day so we shared in a prayer service with the Cabrini Sisters who reside at Sacred Heart Convent in New York City.



The Cabrini Lay Missionaries paid a visit in person and via Zoom to the Missionary Sisters at Sacred Heart Convent on the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Some of the CLMs were at the convent where they celebrated liturgy and lunch with the Sisters and then shared prayer with some of the other CLMs via Zoom. What a beautiful way to honor Our Lady. In addition to prayer, it was so wonderful to ‘catch up’ with one another and enjoy a lot of laughs. Thank you, Sisters, for your hospitality and for sharing prayer with us.

*~ submitted by Lorraine Campanelli, CLM Director*



### SYNOD Phase for Listening Gets Uneven Start

*~ by Brian Fraga, National Catholic Reporter*

The synod on synodality, as it is referred to in church circles, is an ambitious endeavor that some observers have described as the “biggest consultation exercise in human history.”

Every diocese in the world is being called to consult its local communities and stakeholders over the next eight months. All the listening and dialogue in parish halls, diocesan offices, school gymnasiums, private homes, Zoom meetings, university classrooms and other settings all over the globe represent the first stage in an extensive two year process that will culminate in an October 2023 gathering of bishops and synod delegates in Rome. Pope Francis and other church leaders have framed synodality as a decisive step in the church’s renewal that the Second Vatican Council proposed more than a half century ago. But the early weeks of the synod diocesan phase in

the US so far reveal an uneven response to Francis' vision of a more decentralized, listening and discerning church that "journeys together."

Some dioceses led by bishops who are seen as allies of Francis' reforming agenda, have been proactive in planning listening sessions. Church official in other parts of the country report that more detailed synod plans will soon be forthcoming. Other dioceses, meanwhile, have little mention of the synod on their websites and publications. Catholics in those dioceses say they have received little information about listening sessions of anything related to the synod.

The Vatican has called for bishops to go out to the margins, to go out to the highways and byways to hear the voices of everyone," said Francis DeBernardo, the executive director of New Ways ministry. So unless there's really a concerted effort on the part of the US bishops to promote the synod, especially among those who have been alienated by the church, it's not going to happen, Those voices are not going to be heard." To read the full account please click [here](#)

---

## An Earth-friendly Season of Giving

~ by Brenna Davis, *EarthBeat*, Catholic News Service

The average person in the United States owns over 300,000 items, according to a [2014 story in the Los Angeles Times](#). (And that was seven years ago!) As a person who likes to believe she lives simply, I look around my house, and it is pretty cluttered.

For example, I recently realized that in our household of two, we own four spatulas. That might seem like a silly area on which to focus, but the spatulas are a symptom of a bigger problem. As I mentally debated if we should get rid of two or three of them, I had a moment of clarity: I am way too attached to inconsequential things.

As I started looking around my house, I realized I had a lot of extra stuff that other people might find useful. My community has a [Buy Nothing Project](#) group on Facebook and I started posting free items such as curtains, lamps, pots, and of course, spatulas. It turns out there were a lot of people in my area in need of these items, and as an added bonus, I got to meet some of my neighbors (virtually).

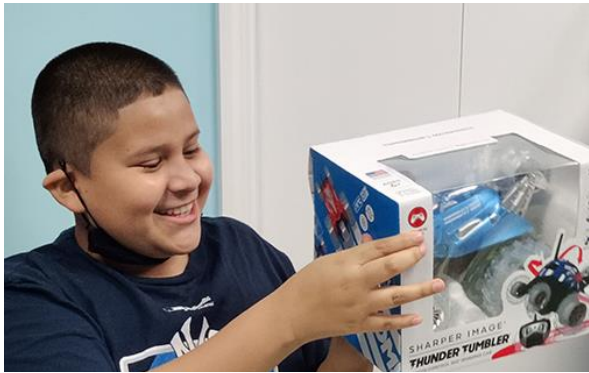
Moving forward, instead of buying things because it provides a temporary feeling of happiness, I pledge to ask myself the following questions to limit my impact on the planet and to limit the number of things in my house that take time and mental energy to maintain:

- Do I truly need this item, or do I want to buy it because I am trying to fill an emotional need?
- How long do I think I need this item will last, and do I anticipate using it throughout its usable period?
- Where did this item come from, and is it something that could be repurposed or recycled at the end of its usable period?

These are questions to keep in mind as we move through this season of giving. Check your cabinets and closets. Perhaps, something you no longer need might become a treasured - and much needed item – for someone else, an earth-friendly gift!



# Cabrini Kids Having a Very Merry Christmas



**Photo above:** Could this youngster's smile be any bigger? Christmas joy is written all over his face!  
**Photo below:** With the wrapping paper barely off his present, this young man's eyes are filled with delight.



There is nothing like the smiles of children, especially at this time of year. On December 13<sup>th</sup>, Cabrini Immigrant Services (CIS), Dobbs Ferry, NY had its holiday party for the students who attend the Afterschool Homework Program.

After having some delicious pizza, the children received gifts from Santa. A special thank you to Bonnie Burke, Vice President of Operations/Nursing Home Administrator at St. Cabrini Nursing Home, for having a Giving Tree for our Cabrini Kids.

When the children received their gifts, there was so much excitement in the room. We heard them saying, "I love it," "I've wanted this my whole life," "It's my favorite color," etc. Thank you to all those who helped make the holidays extra special for our Cabrini Kids.

*~ submitted by: Lorraine Campanelli, Director, CIS, Dobbs Ferry, NY*

---

## Cabrini Moms Celebrate, too!

The Christmas Spirit was alive and well at Cabrini Immigrant Services (CIS), Dobbs Ferry, NY. On December 15<sup>th</sup>, we had a special Christmas celebration

for some of our Moms who attend our classes and programs at CIS. Everyone brought in different dishes from their home countries. After tasting so many delicious foods, we then enjoyed many scrumptious desserts.

The Moms had a Secret Santa. Each person said beautiful words about the person for whom "Santa" brought a gift. It was a wonderful evening and the Moms enjoyed having some "Mom time" to share with friends during the holiday season. There was so much joy and laughter among us. One thing for sure, was that it was great to be back together in person, celebrating such a special time of the year. *~ submitted by Lorraine Campanelli, CIS Director, Dobbs Ferry, NY*



Cabrini Moms gathered for a holiday dinner at CIS featuring homemade dishes from their countries of origin. What a joyful occasion!



## *From the Guadalupe Province Vocations Team...*

*Humor and play have a place in the serious business of vocational discernment. Presenting the final segment in this series of...*

### **Taking Ourselves Lightly**

*~ by Sr. Michele Vincent Fisher, CSFN in HORIZON Journal of the NRVC*

#### **Spice it up**

Opportunities for play and fun are all around. Here are some ideas:

- Can you arrange virtual or in-person access to a senior center or skilled nursing center where discerners can visit with the wisdom figures of your congregation?
- Does your community have artists, writers, or musicians who can share their gifts and help discerners to draw upon their creativity?
- Are there special liturgical feasts or holidays that can be a spring board for creative ideas? Or serve as an opportunity to join your community in celebrating?
- Can community members participate in recreational for creative initiatives, online, or in-person?
- Does your congregation have a garden or other outdoor seasonal work - anything from raking leaves to shoveling snow – that participants can work together to accomplish?
- Is there space for discerners to collaborate in a cooking project, such as making soup or baking cookies? And, afterwards, could the results be distributed to a worthy organization as a service project?
- Does your community have a special ministry for those in need that you could offer volunteer opportunities for discerners?
- Is there a film or show with themes related to discernment, social justice, or your community charism that you might like to invite discerners to view and engage in a discussion following?



Of course, it's also good to take advantage of spontaneous opportunities for fun. Many times discerners themselves will find ways to use their creativity and humor during their free time or in response to an activity. Let the Spirit lead you. Relax and try to draw others, particularly your own community members into the fun.

Most of all, enjoy the lightheartedness that comes when brothers and sisters work, pray and play side-by-side and attract others to share in the gift that is religious life.

This concludes the series on Taking Ourselves Lightly.

#### **Weekly Update – Publication Notice**

Today's edition of The Update is the last for 2021.  
The Update will resume publication on Thursday, January 6, 2022  
The Province Communications Office wishes everyone a very **Merry Christmas**  
and good health and good news in 2022!

*Each week, during the season of Advent, one of the Cabrini Lay Missionaries (CLM) has been offering a reflection. This week's reflection is by Melanie Paccillo, CLM.*

## Fourth Sunday in Advent

Sunday, December 19, 2021

I admit to having giggled after reading the first line of this week's first reading. "You, Bethlehem-Ephrathah too small to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel." My first thought was the old saying, "good things come in small packages." I have always appreciated the sentiment, especially as a person upon whom God did not bestow the gift of height. It is also very true.

Kindness can come in small packages. Compassion can come in small packages. Grace itself can be found in very small packages.

In the Gospel we travel with Mary visiting her cousin Elizabeth. Upon hearing the voice of our Lord's mother, the infant is said to have "leaped" in Elizabeth's womb. The sound of a voice and two unborn children who would soon change the world – very good things in small packages.

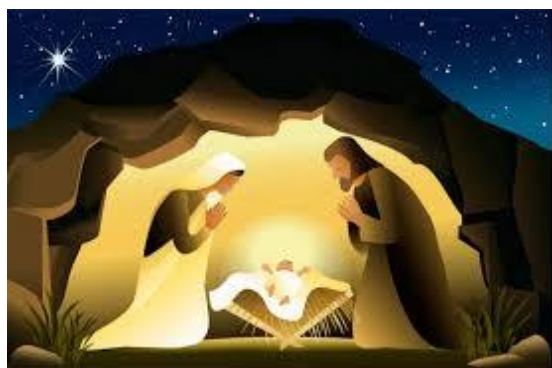
As we near the Nativity of Jesus, let us be mindful of the small things in our lives that remind us of the presence of our very great God. ~ *Melanie Paccillo, CLM*



---

***Our reflection for Christmas is by Lorraine Campanelli, Director of the Cabrini Lay Missionaries.***

### A Christmas Reflection



Our Advent waiting is over. Our Lord Jesus is born! The manger, which has been empty, is filled with the new life. This life is different, it is the Son of God. In a lowly manger, Christ, the son of the Living God was born.

Today as our hearts fill with the excitement and joy of a newborn's birth, let us reflect on all that this little babe is to the world: Jesus, the Life, the Word, the Light, the Lamb, the Lord, the Son of God, the Son of Joseph and Mary, the Prince of Peace.

As we look upon the Christ child let us pray, Jesus, my Life, my Word, my Light, my Lamb, my Lord. Fill my heart to overflowing with Your love, Your mercy, Your forgiveness, Your new life and Your peace. Amen.



## Prayer Requests

### *Janicemarie Echols*

Prayers are requested for Janicemarie Echols (formerly Sr. Marina, MSC) who has been re-admitted to the hospital. She is suffering from complications due to blood cancer. Please keep her in your thoughts and prayers.

### *Sr. Mary Ann Hawes, MSC*

Please continue your prayers for Sr. Mary Ann who is still hospitalized.

### *Sr. Xavier Hayden, MSC*

Prayers for Sr. Xavier would be appreciated; she is experiencing some medical issues.

### *Tornado victims*

We unite in prayer for our neighbors in the Mid-West as they cope with the trauma that has befallen their communities. Dear Lord, give strength and courage to those who have lost their homes, their livelihoods, their friends and family members. Give them hope as they struggle to recover and rebuild. Walk with them each day so that they will know your peace.

## In Loving Memory

### *Maria Panettieri*

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Maria Panettieri, the sister-in-law of Sr. Lucy Panettieri, MSC who passed away suddenly. May she rest in God's eternal peace.



May the birth of the Christ Child  
always remind us of the connection among us all as one human family  
and renew our hope for welcome, kindness, and a more peaceful world.

And this year, especially, may Christmas  
bring the gift of good health and joy to a world that is weary.

*The Missionary Sisters wish everyone a blessed and happy Christmas.*