



## SMALL GROUP NEWSLETTER ST. MARY OF THE VISITATION PARISH CAMBRIDGE, (H) ONT.

### THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

December 17, 2017

#### Introduction to the Word:

It's a reality that "Company's Coming." Each week we are going to look at aspects or virtues we need to have in our life as we get ready for The Feast of the Nativity of Jesus! This Season can be overwhelming - but we need to look even in the midst of such at what really counts. So

far we have focussed on the need for "[Humility](#)" which leads us to develop the virtue of "[Hope](#)". We tackled "[Perspective](#)" which leads us to develop the virtue of "Faith." This past week we look at "[Forgiveness](#)" as a primary characteristic in our life. This Sunday we will look at generosity and discuss "Love" especially of Neighbour. As each candle is lit, and this week we lite the pink one, may each virtue help us to prepare for Company which is Coming!

#### Warm-up Activity: (5-10 minutes)

(Some of these questions repeat because as we move in Advent the meaning may change)

- What are the most stressful environments and situations you will be in over the next few days? How can you be more intentional in your interactions with people this Christmas? What are some simple ways you can be a blessing to others? (3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent)
- What does the term "Forgiveness" mean to you? (2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent)
- What do the terms "perspective" and "faith" mean to you? (1<sup>st</sup> of Advent)
- How do you think they are related to "hope" and "humility"? (Christ the King)
- Do you think they relate to being a "consumer" or "contributor"? (Stewardship Sunday)
- Name one "Advent" goal you have for yourself and for your small group?

#### Let us pray together our Heart to Home Prayer:

*God Our Heavenly Father, we long to make our thoughts your thoughts,  
and our ways your ways. As we prepare with attentive mind and open heart  
to hear your Word Lord, we long to be empowered with your Spirit  
so that we may bring your Word to our families, our parish and our communities.*

*This, our prayer, we make through the intercession of Our Lady of the Visitation and in name of  
Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.*

#### GOSPEL (John 1:6-8, 19-28)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to John. **Glory to you, O Lord.**

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. This is the testimony given by John when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" He confessed and did not deny it, but confessed, "I am not the Messiah." And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." Then they said to him, "Who are you? Let us have an



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answer for those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?” He said, “I am the voice of one crying out in the wilderness, ‘Make straight the way of the Lord.’” As the Prophet Isaiah said. Now they had been sent from the Pharisees. They asked him, “Why then are you baptizing if you are neither the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?” John answered them, “I baptize with water. Among you stands one whom you do not know, the one who is coming after me; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandal.” This took place in Bethany across the Jordan where John was baptizing. The Gospel of the Lord. **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

### Consider hearing again the Sunday Message as Small Group

#### **Questions for Discussion:** (15-20 minutes)

*“We must distinguish between prayer and saying prayers. Prayer is an attitude of the heart that can transform every activity. We cannot say prayers at all times but we can pray without ceasing. But this requires that we keep our heart open to everything that we encounter on any given day. Gratefulness, that is, living life gratefully, does this moment by moment”*  
(*Gratefulness, The Heart of Prayer* [Ramsey, NJ: Paulist Press, 1984], 211).

- ✓ These days that lead to Christmas can fill us with stress as we focus on self, schedule and stuff. How does the above statement fit as we seek to think of others?
- ✓ Your small group is invited to share one or two of your own favourite ways of praying that have helped you through tough times and tough years.

#### **Moving Forward in Prayer** (15-20 minutes)

*(This time is reserved for quiet prayer as well as for an action-response to the communal reflections. You may wish to create and add petitions of prayer at this time. This time also intent to provide moments to connect and “outreach” to the larger community.)*

- Discuss together how the Advent Journey has been so far, and whom you are inviting to Mass for Christmas in Hespeler?

#### **GROUP PRAYER COMMITMENT**

- Offer a Holy Hour in Adoration for the intentions of our Parish and its Pastor.
- Pray the [Prayer of Humility](#) that was distributed in your daily prayers with the intention  
Leader: **Let us seek the intercession of the Patroness of our Parish as we pray: Hail Mary**

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