

8REL Newsletter – 11.30.20

Hello 8th Grade Families,

Welcome back! In Religion class, the students will spend this week focusing on the seasons of Advent and Christmas.

The Church's Advent liturgies help us prepare to celebrate Christ's coming. At the beginning of Advent, the Scripture readings invite us to open our hearts, to be renewed in spirit, and to find ways of becoming more holy and pleasing to God. We are asked to wait vigilantly and quietly for Christ, who comes to us in unexpected ways each day and will come again in glory at the end of the world.

As Advent continues, we hear in the readings the voices of Isaiah and John the Baptizer telling us to prepare for the Lord's coming by repenting and making straight our paths. We are reminded that Jesus came for the poor, the sick, and the outcasts of society, and we remember that we are asked to reach out to others and to work for peace and justice. During the last week of Advent, the Church presents Mary as a model of faith. Mary said yes to God's invitation to be the mother of his Son. Mary trusted God completely. We learn from Mary that God's grace is always with us, strengthening and guiding us. God sends the Messiah to stand by our side. The Messiah is Emmanuel, "God with us."

For Catholics, advent is a time of preparing spiritually for Christmas. We try to see with the eyes of faith. We try to be open to the voice of the Spirit within. We try to walk, each day, in the company of Jesus, our Savior. Christmas celebrations and customs are all about human relationships. The source of our celebration is not just the fact of the birth of Jesus. We also celebrate the effect that this one human being's life had on the world and its history. Like the shepherds and the Magi, we are called to be aware of Jesus' coming, to offer our gifts to him, and to share with others the miracle of his coming into the world as one of us. It is up to us to continue to echo the good news of the Incarnation in the world today.

Students will create ornaments for the Jesse Tree to celebrate those who came before Jesus to help prepare the way. They will also explain how reflecting on the O'Antiphons helps us prepare for Christmas and then identify some of the heralds who have awakened us to Christ's presence among us.

--

Mrs. Esquivel
Mr. Bilski
Senorita Tomko