



The Meditation

The Second Sunday in Advent – A.D. 2016

(December 4th)



***Ecce Ancilla Domini!* - (The Annunciation) -1850**
by Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828 - 1882)

2.

UPDATE

Dear Subscribers,

As you may or may not have surmised, we have had serious issues with our computer. A wind storm on October 30th knocked out the power in our area and caused our computer to crash, killing our already old and shaky hard drive. Shortly after we got the computer back with a new hard drive, and the programs reinstalled we were hacked, which has caused more problems. We lost our mailing list for the Meditation but thankfully we had good old pen and paper back up for most. We are aware that we are now at the Second week in Advent but, where we missed the first week, we are going to do a test mailing with a short meditation written by Sr. Mary Francis a few years ago. We are sorry for any inconveniences caused by this disruption. We have missed sending you this Meditation which we feel is a vital monastic spiritual outreach to you and a labor of love for us. We would ask, that if this Meditation makes it to you, you would please send us a quick e-mail with an acknowledgment so we will know if the e-mail issue has been solved. If you know of others who receive the Meditation, please check with them to see if they have received this issue, as we were only able to recover 75% of our mailing list.

Fr. Kevin, Sr. Mary-Francis & all at Our Lady of Seven Sorrows

The Collect from the first Sunday in Advent.

Almighty God, give us Grace that we may cast away the works of darkness and put upon us the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life, in which thy Son, Jesus Christ, came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when He should come again in His glorious majesty to judge both the quick and the dead, we may rise to life immortal, through Him who liveth and reigneth with Thee and the Holy Ghost, now and forever. Amen.

Advent is, and has traditionally been a time of evaluation and preparation. It is not so much a time of penitential evaluation and preparation but more a search and rescue. Advent is a time of waiting for God in the coming Christ Child. *"It is high time to wake out of sleep, for now our salvation is nearer is nearer than when we believed."* (Romans 13:8) It is a time for searching our souls more earnestly and honestly, of prayerful apology and appreciation and a general cleaning and reorganizing of our spiritual "home" ...our heart...our soul. We once again hear in Romans, *"The night is far spent, the day is at hand, let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armor of light."* How can we accomplish this?

3.

Come to the Stable...It is the time before the coming of Christ. The royalty and upper class of the kingdom are fat and well fed. They steal from the poor who constantly suffer torment, hunger and degradation from soldiers and the like. Each end of the spectrum lives in fear. Herod, the king, fears losing his kingdom to a new king who has been prophesied to come “*for from you (Bethlehem)shall come a ruler who will govern my people Israel...*” (Matt. 2:6) Herod, fearful and consumed with hatred and anger, does not see the beautiful light from the star on that important night. Being enveloped in darkness, and with no guidance from the Wise Men who had been warned in a dream to not return to Herod, he lashes out at all male children in the region under 2 years of age and kills them all, perceiving them as a threat to his reign. Christ is never shown to Herod. He is, in fact, hidden from him by his parents who flee to Egypt. The light and love of Christ never enters the heart of Herod and he dies as miserably as he lived.

Come to the Stable....Many of the people of the region are frustrated. They work only to have their bounty taken, their villages are plundered, women violated and children frightened. Blatantly amorous activities are prevalent. Many are filled with hopelessness. Some are reaching for success any way they can. Trickery, dishonesty and theft are common. They are too busy climbing all over each other to get ahead, too wrapped up in their own wants and desires. They listen to no one but themselves. They do not see the star or feel the warmth of its guiding light. They are also passed by, by God in the Christ child.

Come to the Stable....The shepherds are familiar with this humble place. It serves as a place of refuge and rest for them. It is a place to regroup and regenerate, a respite from the harsh world outside. It is a place of quiet and wonderful smells. The shepherds were simple people who led simple, yet harsh lives. They had nothing and at the same time had everything that they needed. They denied themselves most of the comforts common to people of their times. Their lives were predominantly spent in nature, with their sheep and their God. Even with eyes constantly alert for threats to their flocks, they were able to pray, meditate and sing praise to God. They were childlike and pure of heart and watchful....constantly watchful. It was these humble servants of the sheep to whom God made Himself apparent in the Child Jesus. It was those watchful eyes which saw the star, the trusting, childlike hearts that desired to follow and see and the simple, humble knees which were first bent, in a barn with the animals, the lowest of the lowly, in pure reverence to a Child King, Christ Jesus, as the angels sang on high “*Glory be to God in the highest and on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.*”

How should we begin an effective Advent of watching and waiting? Come to the Stable....sit in the hay, smell the smells that Jesus first smelled. Listen to the rhythmic breathing and chewing of the animals who saw no threat in these unexpected Christmas guests. Those were the first sights and sounds that surrounded the King of Kings. Lord of Lords, King of the Jews, God Incarnate....Should this not be a good place for us as well?

How do we begin an enlightening Advent?....At the beginning of course! We must go back to the Stable, to Christ's beginning and ours as well, when we were first children, children of God, pure, innocent, humble and simple. The time for readjustment is here. “ We must put on the armor of light” and with open arms and pure hearts, prepare to receive Christ into our hearts anew. Then, and only then, are we able to approach the Holy Table of Christ in the Holy Sacrament of the Christmas Eucharist and kneel with the same reverence as those shepherds of long ago. “***O Come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!***”

Women's Retreat Meditation given on December of 2002 by Sr. Mary-Francis LaMarre, OSB

ANIMAL NEWS

We are in great need of your support. We are looking for regular benefactors (Animal Angels) to help us to keep helping the animals in our care and those who may arrive this winter. No gift is too small and we are truly grateful for any prayerful contribution. Please make checks out to **Servants of the Holy Family** and indicate **"for the animals"** so that money can be used for them. You will receive a thank you and a tax receipt as well as a picture of one of the animals and a little bit about them. These animals deserve a life but we can't do this without you. May God continue to richly bless you and yours as we enter this Holy season.....Thank you!

The Meditation is an online apostolate of **Our Lady of Seven Sorrows Priory** in Raymond, Maine, USA. We are an Anglican-Catholic Benedictine contemplative community that follows the Holy Rule of St. Benedict, the 5th-century Father of Western Monasticism. We are affiliated within the Diocese of the Northeast (DNE), of the Anglican Church in America (ACA), a member of the worldwide Traditional Anglican Communion (TAC).

The Meditation is a weekly on-line offering that is sent out free of charge to anyone who desires to receive it. Subscribers may copy and pass along the Meditation to their families and friends, or send us their e-address (*with their permission*) to add to our subscription list. Each edition is sent out as a BCC (Blank Copy) in respect to subscriber privacy. **To subscribe, contact us at : klamarre@maine.rr.com**

In respect to our contemplative vocation and the animals in our rescue and rehab center, we do not have guest facilities and do not regularly receive visitors.

Priory Kalendar

For the week of
December 4th to December 11th - A.D. 2016

Sunday, December 4thThe Second Sunday in Advent

Monday, December 5th *feria in Advent.*

Tuesday, December 6th **St. Nicholas; Bp. & Conf. 4th cent.**

Wednesday, December 7th **St. Ambrose; Bp. Conf. Doct. 4th cent.**

Thursday, December 8th **Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

Friday, December 9th *in the Octave of the Immaculate Conception*

Saturday, December 10th *in the Octave.*

Sunday, December 11thThe Third Sunday in Advent



