

The word of the Bishop

My dear brethren,

With this booklet in your hands, I once again accompany you. I do so with the desire to share the great gift of faith that we all have received; a sharing that is to be a sign of brotherhood that the Gospel calls us to build a daily.

In my last pastoral letter, "Women and men, capable of the Gospel", I suggested the Gospel of the Beatitudes as point of reflection for this pastoral year. Here Jesus is presented as Master, Master of humanity and for humanity. And like the disciples, we Christians are invited to go closer to Him in order to listen to His Words well and to be increasingly aware that, if this happens, we are truly blessed.

The catechism is a way that the Church offers us in order for us to be closer to Jesus and to listen to Him better: we are invited to be listeners of His Word, to stay with Him, to be able to share his experiences and words. And the Beatitudes are only some of these words which in a way, already tell us the thing we are called for and destined to be: a beautiful life, good, worthy of being lived.

The Advent is a trace of way in order to live fully so that one can really taste the real meaning of the birth of Jesus. For this "High Season", we have as a sign the star; the same star which from heaven guided the Magi along the way to Jesus. The star is an image that we can easily associate with Christmas. The star is a provocation that raises a question and a sign to be interpreted: even the science of the Magi understand it without the light of the holy scripture. The star is also a source of joy because from heaven is revealed the coming of the precious gift for us.

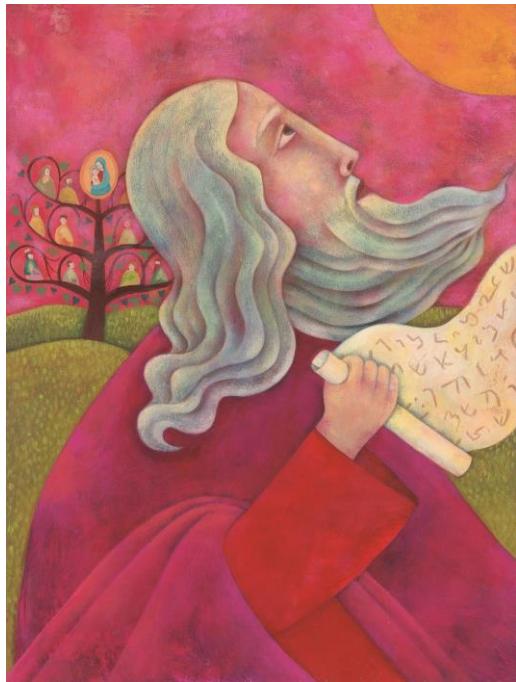
Here now is the invitation for this Advent: "Let us follow the Star". Let us follow it together. Let us follow it like the Magi who the star had made capable of the Goodness. For you and me: Have a nice Journey!

+ J. Lancia, vescovo



LET US READ AGAIN THE LETTER OF THE BISHOP: «The purpose of this letter is not to increase the number of adult Christians who attend catechesis, but that of awakening and renewing the awareness that faith in Jesus Christ, Crucified and Risen, challenges, enlightens and transforms in a decisive way the life of man, of every man, of all humanity».

F. BESCHI, PASTORAL LETTER 2013-2014 « WOMEN AND MEN CAPABLE OF THE GOSPEL »



Looking at Isaiah

Isaiah, the great prophet who sings the coming of the Messiah, scans the sky, while shaking the scroll of the book of the law, "prophet Isaiah revealed the future until the end of time, things hidden before it happen" (Sir 48,25). His mission is to make the people hearken to the Word of God, in prayer, looking at the signs of the times and interpreting them.

A breeze that lifts the beard and vibrates the written text is perhaps the breath of the Spirit that gives life to the Creation? On his shoulders, on the green hills that the prophet contemplates as the promise of a new story for humanity, this is a tree.

A particular tree: it is the seed of Jesse, the genealogy of Jesus, the history of salvation that the people of Israel is part. The medallion at the top, in the center of the tree, even though small, it allows us to recognize Mary and the Child: fulfillment of the words of Isaiah: "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and you shall name him Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14).

With ISAIAH we are blessed in prayer



IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, OF THE SON
AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

From the Gospel according to Matthew (24 :42-44)

Jesus said to his disciples: "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know on what day your Lord will come. But understand this: If the owner of the house had known at what time of night the thief was coming, he would have kept watch and would not have let his house be broken into. So you also must be prepared, because the Son of Man will come at an hour when you do not expect him."

Here is the first exhortation at the beginning of Advent: "be vigilant", that is "stay awake", don't forget that you are waiting for Jesus, indeed prepare your heart day after day to receive Him through the attentive listening of His Word.

FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 1

THE BEATITUDE OF THE PRAYER

And in this way we would like to prepare ourselves for Christmas!

Let us pray:

Jesus, you invite us to stay awake,
to wait for you always,
and not to be tired of praying to You.
Be Thou our guide
in this Advent journey,
help us to trust in You
and open our hearts
to welcome Your coming
in our midst.

Raising our hands let us pray together:

OUR FATHER...

LET US PRAISE THE LORD
THANKS BE TO GOD



With ISAIAH we are blessed in prayer



IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, OF THE SON
AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

From the Gospel according to Matthew (8:6-8)

"Lord," he said, "my servant lies at home paralyzed, suffering terribly." Jesus said to him, "Shall I come and heal him?" The centurion replied, "Lord, I do not deserve to have you come under my roof. But just say the word, and my servant will be healed."

This Roman centurion amazes us. He is a humble man, who feels unworthy to receive Jesus in his house, but has great faith in Him: he knows that only a word from Jesus will be healed his servant. And in fact it will happen. We should also be like the centurion: simple, confident, and sure of his love, Lord, who never abandons us and "heal" each one of us.

Let us pray:

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and open our hearts
to welcome Your coming
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THANKS BE TO GOD

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IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, OF THE SON
AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

From the Gospel according to Luke (10:21)

At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this is what you were pleased to do."

To receive Jesus there is the need to make oneself "Small", that is, to feel like this before Him, learning to trust in Him more than in our capacity and quality. It is in this manner that we can really know Him and receive Him. Jesus enjoys revealing Himself to us and we can share in the same joy.

FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 3

THE BEATITUDE OF THE PRAYER

Let us pray:

Jesus, you invite us to stay awake,
to wait for you always,
and not to be tired of praying to You.
Be Thou our guide
in this Advent journey,
help us to trust in You
and open our hearts
to welcome Your coming
in our midst.

Raising our hands let us pray together:

OUR FATHER...

LET US PRAISE THE LORD
THANKS BE TO GOD



WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4

THE BEATITUDE OF THE PRAYER



IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, OF THE SON
AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

**From the Gospel according to Matthew
(15:37-38)**

Jesus summoned his disciples and said, "My heart is moved with pity for the crowd, for they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them away hungry..." The disciples said to him, "Where could we ever get enough bread in this deserted place to satisfy such a crowd?"

Where can we find the resources for ourselves and for our brothers? Sometimes it seems impossible and we would like to surrender in front of the problems. But Jesus asks us to accept the "risk", in sharing the little things we have and in this way the miracle can happen because He multiplies abundantly.

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IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, OF THE SON
AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

From the Gospel according to Matthew (7:24-25)

"Everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a wise man who built his house on rock. The rain fell, the floods came, and the winds blew and buffeted the house. But it did not collapse; it had been set solidly on rock."

Listening to the Word of the Lord and following His teachings, he makes us intelligent. It is this wisdom of the heart given by Jesus, that gives us strength to face the difficulties and to overcome them. Jesus is the Rock on which we build our life, to base our designs, and to look at our future with hope.

FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5

THE BEATITUDE OF THE PRAYER

Let us pray:

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and not to be tired of praying to You.
Be Thou our guide
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help us to trust in You
and open our hearts
to welcome Your coming
in our midst.

Raising our hands let us pray together:

OUR FATHER...

LET US PRAISE THE LORD
THANKS BE TO GOD





In the name of the Father, of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**From the Gospel according to Matthew
(9:27-29)**

As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, calling out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!" When he had gone indoors, the blind men came to him, and he asked them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" "Yes, Lord," they replied. Then he touched their eyes and said, "According to your faith let it be done to you".

How many times we feel the need to turn to Jesus, to ask for His forgiveness, to ask for His help. We cannot do it by ourselves. We are saved by His love. Jesus knows our needs, but it is important that we express them to Him, and we recognize that we need His presence and closeness. It is good to have trust in Jesus and to be sure that we can count on Him.

With ISAIAH we are blessed in prayer

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Raising our hands let us pray together:

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THANKS BE TO GOD

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IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, OF THE SON
AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

From the Gospel according to Luke (9:36-38)

At the sight of the crowds, his heart was moved with pity for them because they were troubled and abandoned, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest."

Jesus is never tired of teaching, helping, uplifting, curing and healing. He is always ready to give a hand. But He needs collaboration, the availability from the part of His disciples, from our part. It takes many "workers" for the Kingdom. And for this also prayer is important.

FIRST WEEK OF ADVENT

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7

THE BEATITUDE OF THE PRAYER

Let us pray:

Jesus, you invite us to stay awake,
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and not to be tired of praying to You.
Be Thou our guide
in this Advent journey,
help us to trust in You
and open our hearts
to welcome Your coming
in our midst.

Raising our hands let us pray together:

OUR FATHER...

LET US PRAISE THE LORD
THANKS BE TO GOD



LET US READ AGAIN THE LETTER OF THE BISHOP: «The contribution of the Christian faith to a more human life is a criterion for decisive judgment in the sensitivity and even the consciousness of a man and a woman of our time».

F. BESCHI, PASTORAL LETTER 2013-2014 « WOMEN AND MEN CAPABLE OF THE GOSPEL »



Looking at Maria

A young woman communicates to us the serenity and trust with which she lives her life. This woman is Mary, in the evening Annunciation of the birth of Jesus, her peace is born by the yes that she gives to the angel sent by the Most High, is the peace that comes from the heart of those who choose to do the will of God.

In one hand she has a small book, the sign of personal prayer, that intimacy that takes place in the privacy of one's own room, the one that reveals the Father's tenderness for each of His child. In the other, a white lily: sign of purity and of light, a scented star, gift of the angel who came to visit her. The walls of the house of Mary have become beautiful as starry heavens: by the infinite will of God He will be small as a baby and a brother of every man.

In the background the figure of the angel that goes up to heaven: the mission is accomplished through the faith of Mary, faith that is welcoming and trusting, faith capable of giving life.

The Immaculate Conception of Mary

With MARY we are blessed in faith



IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, OF THE SON
AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

From the Gospel according to Luke (1:34-35.38)

And the angel said to Mary in reply, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God. "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May your word to me be fulfilled." Then the angel left her.

The journey towards Christmas is becoming shorter and to Mary we ask that she accompanies us. About Mary, her authentic and total trust in God attracts us: she is the model for every Christian! Mary is blessed because she listened to the Word of God, her and our Master! If we will think of it, the beatitudes of Mary, can also be ours.

SECOND WEEK OF ADVENT

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 8

THE BEATITUDE OF THE FAITH

Let us pray:

Mary, blessed because you believed!
Set your maternal glance
on each of us
in these days of waiting;
help us to contemplate the amazement
that you felt yourself in listening
to the Word of God;
give vitality to our faith
sometimes uncertain
and grant that we may walk in joy
of one who puts his trust in God alone.

Holding our hands let us pray together:

OUR FATHER...

LET US PRAISE THE LORD
THANKS BE TO GOD



MONDAY, DECEMBER 9

THE BEATITUDE OF THE FAITH



In the name of the Father, of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**From the Gospel according to Luke
(5:18-20)**

Some men came carrying a paralyzed man on a mat and tried to take him into the house to lay him before Jesus. When they could not find a way to do this because of the crowd, they went up on the roof and lowered him on his mat through the tiles into the middle of the crowd, right in front of Jesus. When Jesus saw their faith, he said, "Friend, your sins are forgiven."

The paralytic was healed thanks to the faith of his friends: a faith formed in love, courage, firmness and perseverance. Thanks to the faith of his friends, Jesus accomplishes a miracle greater than what they requested: He forgives sins. This is the power of the faith of the community. Like the paralyzed man, let us experience being carried to Jesus.

With MARY we are blessed in faith

Let us pray:

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that you felt yourself in listening
to the Word of God;
give vitality to our faith
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Holding our hands let us pray together:

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LET US PRAISE THE LORD
THANKS BE TO GOD

With MARY we are blessed in faith



IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, OF THE SON
AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

From the Gospel according to Matthew (18:12-14)

"What do you think? If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and go to look for the one that wandered off? In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should perish.

Still another overturning! How one can define "good" a shepherd who prefers to go in search for a sheep which turns away from the fold, instead of caring for the 99? We will say he is worse. Fortunately, the logic of God is not like ours! "That No one is lost!": this certainty gives us enough hope because many times, it happens that we are the sheep that goes away from the fold.

SECOND WEEK OF ADVENT

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 10

THE BEATITUDE OF THE FAITH

Let us pray:

Mary, blessed because you believed!
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on each of us
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help us to contemplate the amazement
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to the Word of God;
give vitality to our faith
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Holding our hands let us pray together:

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THANKS BE TO GOD



WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 11

THE BEATITUDE OF THE FAITH



In the name of the Father, of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit. AMEN.

**From the Gospel according to Matthew
(11:28-30)**

"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for your selves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light."

A little rest: is what is necessary in the journey of growing in faith during this time of Advent. It is not an ordinary rest, but rest in the Lord. We learn from Jesus, taking seriously His Word, as Mary has done. We must not be afraid to throw ourselves into His arms. It is only in Him that we can find a better life if we really believe.

With MARY we are blessed in faith

Let us pray:

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Set your maternal glance
on each of us
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help us to contemplate the amazement
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give vitality to our faith
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and grant that we may walk in joy
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Holding our hands let us pray together:

OUR FATHER...

LET US PRAISE THE LORD
THANKS BE TO GOD

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 12

THE BEATITUDE OF THE FAITH

With MARY we are blessed in faith



IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, OF THE SON
AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

From the Gospel according to Matthew (11:11)

Jesus said to the crowd: "Among those born of women there has been none greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

What a great eulogy Jesus composed for John! It is a praise of authentic faith, of his faithful listener, of his courageous testimony... however there is a "but", a "but" which involves us because it refers also to us, it speaks of the little ones in the Kingdom who await the coming of Christ with faith! We also find ourselves among these little ones if we allow ourselves to be involved in this encounter of faith.

Let us pray:

Mary, blessed because you believed!
Set your maternal glance
on each of us
in these days of waiting;
help us to contemplate the amazement
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to the Word of God;
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and grant that we may walk in joy
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Holding our hands let us pray together:

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LET US PRAISE THE LORD
THANKS BE TO GOD



FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13

THE BEATITUDE OF THE FAITH



In the name of the Father, of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit. AMEN.

**From the Gospel according to Matthew
(11:17-19b)**

"We played the flute for you, but you did not dance, we sang a dirge but you did not mourn. But wisdom is vindicated by her works."

Certainly it has happened to everyone to be criticized by saying one thing and to be criticized again a day after by saying the exact opposite by the same person... something is wrong. It is part of the difficulties in building relationship and of acceptance. Even Mary, in those days of waiting for Jesus' birth, has suffered much for the criticism of those gossips. But, at the end, the Wisdom was recognized.

With MARY we are blessed in faith

Let us pray:

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Set your maternal glance
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give vitality to our faith
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LET US PRAISE THE LORD
THANKS BE TO GOD

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14

THE BEATITUDE OF THE FAITH

With MARY we are blessed in faith



IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, OF THE SON
AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

From the Gospel according to Matthew (17:12-13)

Elijah has already come, and they did not recognize him but did to him whatever they pleased. So also will the Son of Man suffer at their hands". Then the disciples understood that he was speaking to them of John the Baptist.

It is the story of every believer and it is part of the experience of faith: those who in their personal life testify with consistency and decision to the love of the Lord suffer more than others when they contradict against those whose hearts do not find a way to the love of Jesus. But the newness of the Lord that comes sustains us in this fascinating journey.

Let us pray:

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Set your maternal glance
on each of us
in these days of waiting;
help us to contemplate the amazement
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THANKS BE TO GOD



LET US READ AGAIN THE LETTER OF THE BISHOP: «...many people who participate in the life of the community, many who are on the threshold of the Community itself, many who were baptized as babies, should be placed in a position of being able to experiment, to be able to renew this decisive encounter with Jesus, the Living».

F. BESCHI, PASTORAL LETTER 2013-2014 « WOMEN AND MEN CAPABLE OF THE GOSPEL »



Looking at John the Baptist

John the Baptist is walking. He cannot sit still and cannot even accept the convenience of a roof, a bed: he must go and preach. "The word of God came to John, the son of Zechariah in the desert. And he came into all the region of the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins" (Lk 3:2). Conversion is necessary, it is the only path that can lead each of us to the Lord and He to us.

The conversion of the heart needs a gesture that touches body and soul and enlightens the mind: in the river Jordan, John gives his baptism renewing hope in those who turn to him. He invites all those who listen to divide their resources, to share, not to keep anything superfluous. He leaves his example of sobriety and renunciation to all.

He glances far to the Messiah who is to come: in his right hand, the pilgrim's staff is already a cross and the scroll recalls his profession of faith in Jesus: "Behold the Lamb of God" (Jn 1:29).

With JOHN THE BAPTIST we are blessed in conversion



IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, OF THE SON
AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

From the Gospel according to Matthew (11:2-5)

When John heard in prison of the works of the Messiah, he sent his disciples to him with this question, "Are you the one who is to come, or should we expect another?" Jesus said to them in reply, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have the good news proclaimed to them."

Desiring for God, waiting for him, encountering him is the true meaning of Advent. John the Baptist has gone before us in this waiting and thanks to him we can already experience the presence of the Lord in the beautiful things surrounding us. And so let us learn to look for the beautiful, the good,

THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 15

THE BEATITUDE OF CONVERSION

the positive that exist in our lives and those of others and the waiting will become an event.

Let us pray:

Lord, we trust in you
in this time of waiting.
So many times we happened
to wait for someone,
with joy, with anxiety,
imagining the sweetness of the encounter.
Give us the joy of waiting
and teach us to understand,
that the one we are waiting for
is already with us,
as John the Baptist did.

With eyes raised to heaven we pray together:

OUR FATHER...

LET US PRAISE THE LORD
THANKS BE TO GOD



MONDAY, DECEMBER 16

THE BEATITUDE OF CONVERSION

With JOHN THE BAPTIST we are blessed in conversion



In the name of the Father, of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

From the Gospel according to Matthew (21:23)

When he had come into the temple area, the chief priests and the elders of the people approached him as he was teaching and said, "By what authority are you doing these things? And who gave you this authority?"

It often happens today that those with a diploma or a degree are heard; however, those who have not studied or are not of noble origins, could say things more beautiful and true yet they would fall on deaf ears. Today, Jesus warns us against the risk of not recognizing the Lord's coming because obtusely we expect the prophet "with qualification".

Let us pray:

Lord, we trust in you
in this time of waiting.
So many times we happened
to wait for someone,
with joy, with anxiety,
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Give us the joy of waiting
and teach us to understand,
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With eyes raised to heaven we pray together:

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THANKS BE TO GOD

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IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, OF THE SON
AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

From the Gospel according to Matthew (1:1,16)

The genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Jacob was the father of Joseph, the husband of Mary. Of her was born Jesus who is called the Messiah.

A list of names: some are unknown, some are well-known, some are Jews, others are foreigners, some are upright, others are filibusters. And God's plan is realized! All and all, but each of us with our little story, contributes to the coming of the Kingdom of God. What a breath of oxygen! Jesus is a family member: let us wait for Him with the doors wide open.

THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 17

THE BEATITUDE OF CONVERSION

Let us pray:

Lord, we trust in you
in this time of waiting.
So many times we happened
to wait for someone,
with joy, with anxiety,
imagining the sweetness of the encounter.
Give us the joy of waiting
and teach us to understand,
that the one we are waiting for
is already with us,
as John the Baptist did.

With eyes raised to heaven we pray together:

OUR FATHER...

LET US PRAISE THE LORD
THANKS BE TO GOD





THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18

THE BEATITUDE OF CONVERSION

With JOHN THE BAPTIST We are blessed in conversion



In the name of the Father, of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit. AMEN.

From the Gospel according to Matthew (1:20)

The angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her."

We approach Christmas and Joseph, the just man, comes to meet us. The disarming simplicity of Joseph encourages us to search, obliges us to "research" the word of the Lord in which we find the realization of all our dreams. May the Lord preserve us from the temptation of not believing in dreams!

Let us pray:

Lord, we trust in you
in this time of waiting.
So many times we happened
to wait for someone,
with joy, with anxiety,
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Give us the joy of waiting
and teach us to understand,
that the one we are waiting for
is already with us,
as John the Baptist did.

With eyes raised to heaven we pray together:

OUR FATHER...

LET US PRAISE THE LORD
THANKS BE TO GOD

With JOHN THE BAPTIST We are blessed in conversion



IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, OF THE SON
AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

From the Gospel according to Luke (1:14-16)

And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, for he will be great in the sight of the Lord. He will drink neither wine nor strong drink. He will be filled with the holy Spirit even from his mother's womb, and he will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God.

Through the Word, God creates and recreates the world, even where it seems impossible. This is the story of Zechariah and Elizabeth. Let us ask Jesus the gift of being able to listen to the Word: the only way we will never lose hope even in the most difficult situations. Let us not risk of becoming dumb with our unbelief like Zechariah.

THIRD WEEK OF ADVENT

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 19

THE BEATITUDE OF CONVERSION

Let us pray:

Lord, we trust in you
in this time of waiting.
So many times we happened
to wait for someone,
with joy, with anxiety,
imagining the sweetness of the encounter.
Give us the joy of waiting
and teach us to understand,
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is already with us,
as John the Baptist did.

With eyes raised to heaven we pray together:

OUR FATHER...

LET US PRAISE THE LORD
THANKS BE TO GOD



With JOHN THE BAPTIST We are blessed in conversion



IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, OF THE SON
AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. **A**MEN.

From the Gospel according to Luke (1:30b-33)

"Do not be afraid, Mary. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and his kingdom will have no end."

All will happen through the omnipotence of God! On her part, Mary, through her listening, allows the Word of God to penetrate into the heart to change it. And if the happiness of Mary came from listening to the Word of God, the same beatitude will be ours the moment we desire to search for the beauty of the Word of the Lord.

Let us pray:

Lord, we trust in you
in this time of waiting.
So many times we happened
to wait for someone,
with joy, with anxiety,
imagining the sweetness of the encounter.
Give us the joy of waiting
and teach us to understand,
that the one we are waiting for
is already with us,
as John the Baptist did.

With eyes raised to heaven we pray together:

OUR FATHER...

LET US PRAISE THE LORD
THANKS BE TO GOD

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21

THE BEATITUDE OF CONVERSION

With JOHN THE BAPTIST We are blessed in conversion



IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, OF THE SON
AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

From the Gospel according to Luke (1:42-45)

Elizabeth cried out in a loud voice and said, "Most blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled."

Yes, Mary, blessed are you that you believed, that you were entrusted, that you were left to do, blessed is your recklessness that believes in the God of the impossible, blessed is your willingness to be disrupted by life, blessed is your faith. We also want to obtain the gift of faith like Elizabeth encountering the Son of God who comes to us at Christmas.

Let us pray:

Lord, we trust in you
in this time of waiting.
So many times we happened
to wait for someone,
with joy, with anxiety,
imagining the sweetness of the encounter.
Give us the joy of waiting
and teach us to understand,
that the one we are waiting for
is already with us,
as John the Baptist did.

With eyes raised to heaven we pray together:

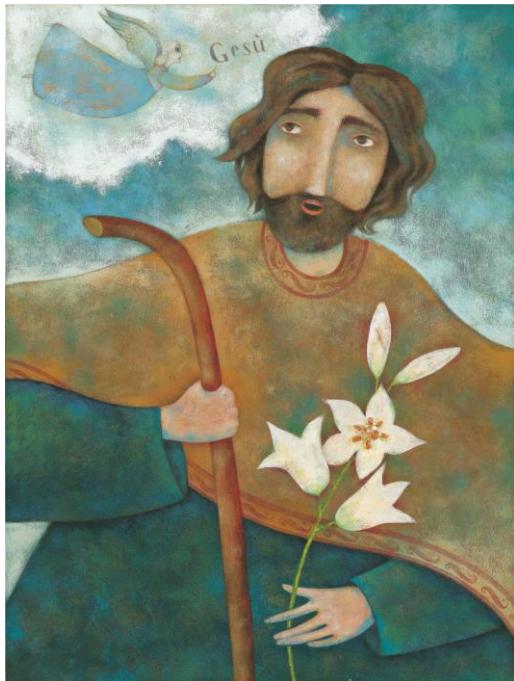
OUR FATHER...

LET US PRAISE THE LORD
THANKS BE TO GOD



LET US READ AGAIN THE LETTER OF THE BISHOP: «The life of the people, of every single person, is a serious place for a non-doctrinal (although necessary) but existential catechesis. The life told, but above all lived is this place».

F. BESCHI, PASTORAL LETTER 2013-2014 « WOMEN AND MEN CAPABLE OF THE GOSPEL »



Looking at Joseph

His face communicates amazement and disbelief, but the serenity of his gaze reveals his patient and profound faith. Joseph believes, against all logic of common sense, the promise he received from the angel and on this promise he founded all his life. The promise of the angel is kept in the name of the Son whom Mary awaits: "Jesus". Jesus means "God saves", God will save all humanity in this child to be born. Welcoming the Child, Joseph becomes part of the story of salvation, the story sung by the prophets.

In his right hand he holds tight the walking stick: it is the stick which supports his every step toward Bethlehem, with his wife, who is about to give birth, and it is the same stick that will lead his family to Egypt, away from the murderous rage of Herod. In his left hand he holds the same lily of Mary, sign of chastity and a shared project between the spouses. Joseph and Mary will make possible the birth and the growth of the Child in grace and in gladness, a gift from heaven for all humanity.

With JOSEPH we are blessed in accepting



IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, OF THE SON
AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

**From the Gospel according to Matthew
(1:20.24)**

The angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your wife into your home. For it is through the holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. When Joseph awoke, he did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his wife into his home.

The angel asked Joseph to believe and accept like Mary. For him also is challenging but renders himself disposed, and thanks to his cooperation, God's design is to be realized. God's plan does not belong only to a few: it is for us too! Let us be disposed to accept.

FOURTH WEEK OF ADVENT

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 22

THE BEATITUDE OF ACCETTANCE

Let us pray:

O Jesus,
you give us in Joseph
an extraordinary example
of obedience,
of readiness, of generosity.
Help us to learn from him
a friendly lifestyle
that opens our hearts
to You and to our brethren.

*Let us exchange the sign of peace
and pray together:*

OUR FATHER...

LET US PRAISE THE LORD
THANKS BE TO GOD



MONDAY, DECEMBER 23

THE BEATITUDE OF ACCETTANCE



In the name of the Father, of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

**From the Gospel according to Luke
(1:62-64)**

So they made signs, asking his father what he wished him to be called. He asked for a tablet and wrote, "John is his name" and all were amazed. Immediately his mouth was opened, his tongue freed, and he spoke blessing God.

Zechariah, this time, did not hesitate. He confirms the will of his wife Elizabeth, which is that of God. And this readiness gives him back the word and the possibility to bless God. Christmas, which is at the door, should not find our hearts closed to the will of the Lord.

With JOSEPH we are blessed in accepting

Let us pray:

O Jesus,
you give us in Joseph
an extraordinary example
of obedience,
of readiness, of generosity.
Help us to learn from him
a friendly lifestyle
that opens our hearts
to You and to our brethren.

*Let us exchange the sign of peace
and pray together:*

OUR FATHER...

LET US PRAISE THE LORD
THANKS BE TO GOD

With JOSEPH we are blessed in accepting



IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, OF THE SON
AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

From the Gospel according to Luke (1:78.79)

“Because of the tender mercy of our God,
by which the daybreak from on high will
visit us to shine on those who sit in
darkness and death’s shadow, to guide our
feet into the path of peace.”

In the words of Zechariah, enlightened by the Spirit, as well as the mission of his son John, we hear a clear reference to the coming of Jesus, who will bring light and peace to humanity. The experience of Zechariah is also ours: the Lord gives us faith to recognize in Jesus the light and the peace for us and for all men.

Let us pray:

O Jesus,
you give us in Joseph
an extraordinary example
of obedience,
of readiness, of generosity.
Help us to learn from him
a friendly lifestyle
that opens our hearts
to You and to our brethren.

*Let us exchange the sign of peace
and pray together:*

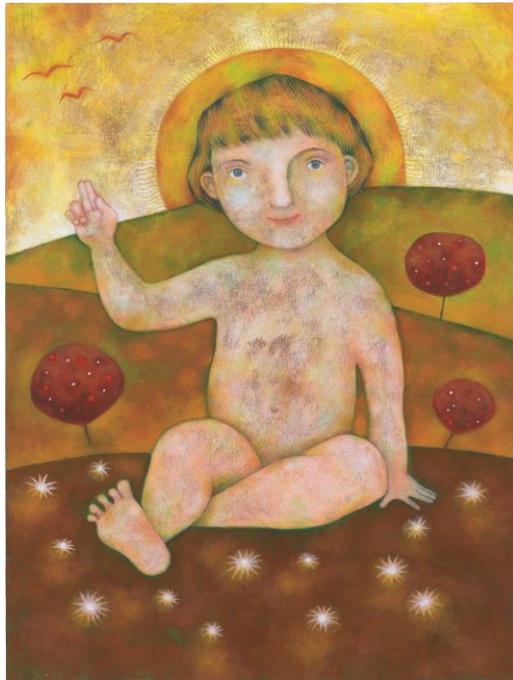
OUR FATHER...

LET US PRAISE THE LORD
THANKS BE TO GOD



LET US READ AGAIN THE LETTER OF THE BISHOP: «Faith is a journey, always a journey; ... It is something alive, ... but firstly, it is a cultivated intuition, unavoidable anxiety, passionate pursuit and finally discovery, wonder, amazement, gift and encounter. Faith is a relationship with Him».

F. BESCHI, PASTORAL LETTER 2013-2014 « WOMEN AND MEN CAPABLE OF THE GOSPEL »



Looking at Jesus

A Child sits quietly on the bare ground. It is the seed of fallen grace and salvation in this time, a seed that will die on the cross to bear fruit of eternal life. The land beside him lights life and beauty: the flowers that sprout look like stars, fireworks and joy to this long-awaited birth.

The sky has the colour of dawn: as we celebrate in the darkest and longer night the birth of Jesus, we are reminded that the "sun rises for those who sit in darkness and the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace" (Lk 1:78-79). The sun behind the Child is his crown of light and glory, the song of praise of all creation at his birth.

The right hand of the Child Jesus is raised up to accomplish a gesture of peace and communion; blessing all women and all men of good will, just like singing in the sky of Bethlehem, the angels who dance and feast.

With JESUS we are blessed in amazement



IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, OF THE SON
AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. AMEN.

From the Gospel according to Luke (2:16-20)

So the shepherds went in haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known the message that had been told them about this child. All who heard it were amazed by what had been told them by the shepherds. And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart.

Jesus is no longer the expected and hope: now he is Life, he is present and dwells among us. A newborn identical to all newborns in this world. He has same flesh like ours, even though he is the Son of God and God Himself. For us who have learned to wait for him, who have longed to welcome

THE BIRTH OF JESUS CHRIST

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 25

THE BEATITUDE OF AMAZEMENT

him, there is the amazement of recognizing him.

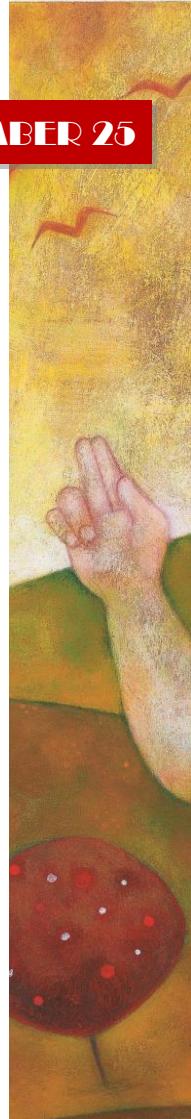
Let us pray:

We want to contemplate you,
Lord,
in the new baby born
in Bethlehem.
We want to be amazed
in your great gift of Love
and keep in our hearts
this wonder,
source of joy for all people.

*Around the crib, looking at the Child Jesus,
let us pray:*

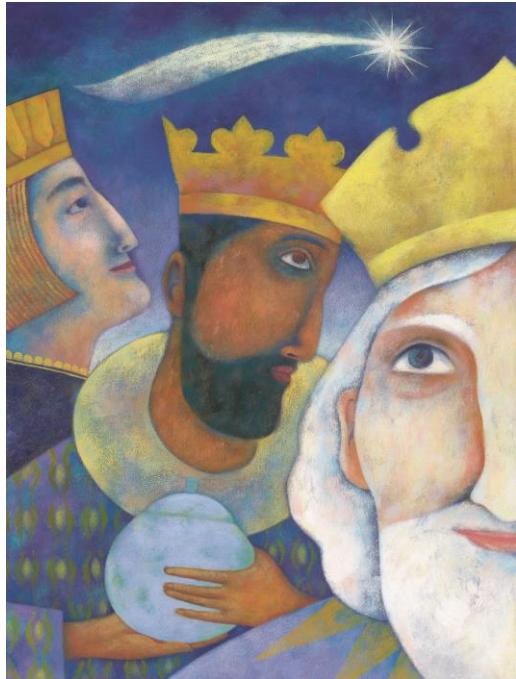
OUR FATHER...

LET US PRAISE THE LORD
THANKS BE TO GOD



LET US READ AGAIN THE LETTER OF THE BISHOP: «...it seems clear to me that the relationship between faith in God and the life of man, the meaning and value of this relationship, are the new world in which one becomes and grows as Christian».

F. BESCHI, PASTORAL LETTER 2013-2014 « WOMEN AND MEN CAPABLE OF THE GOSPEL »



Looking at the Magi

The three wise men from the East watch the star without being tired. It is the guide of their journey: the sign from heaven that leads them to the distant and unknown land. The Magi have a crown on the head: they are kings, they are important and rich people who are not afraid to leave their thrones and possessions to follow the star to reach the place unknown.

The Magi have different ages and color of the skin: in them the whole humanity is invited to Bethlehem, without distinction, without boundaries, without prejudice. They fulfill the prophetic words of Psalm 72 *"Before him will bend the inhabitants of desert, his enemies will lick the dust. The kings of Tarshish and the islands will pay tribute, the kings of Sheba and Saba offer gifts. Before him all kings bow down, all the nations shall serve him"*. The gifts they bring to the manger in Bethlehem are gifts for a king, the king of peace and truth. In small caskets in their hands is kept the essence of their faith: they have believed in a sign in the sky that brought them far away, where they could not even imagine.