

# Teacher, Where do you live?



*Itinerary of Prayer for the Family  
Advent and Christmas 2017-2018*

*Dear families,  
the now, exactly this “now”  
so complex and complicated,  
is the time we have been given to live the world,  
to write pages of good  
with the small acts in the everyday:  
being present moms and dads,  
being sons able to thank,  
being honest workers  
worried for the common good,  
being educators who are passionate about  
man and God.*

*For this time of Advent and Christmas, the desire  
I carry in my heart and I deliver to you  
is that we can keep the Light on,  
the Light that came “in the midst of us”  
to illuminate each man  
and to live the world with love.*

*I wish you to have a good praying!*

*+Francesco*

# Introduction and presentation of the path



At the beginning of this Advent, let us really ask the Lord with the question that the two disciples of John addressed to Jesus himself and with the desire of knowing his presence in the daily story of each man and woman.

Once again, we will be accompanied with a simple instrument that does not have other demand if not that of a beating passage that, day after day, will conduct us to Christmas.

The **booklet** that you have within your hands is **addressed to all families and to each adult** that would like to dedicate time to prayer.

There will also be a space **for moments of sharing with the little ones**, telling stories of life and playing with the key-words of the different weeks.

This will be a path, marked by the **Word of God of Sunday** that, in filigree, will constitute the red thread of the week through a passage of the Gospel for each day and the **reflections of a parish that make it awaiting, prophecy, testimony and reception** into the situations of which children, boys, youth and adults are called.

The **light** will make a guide in the path.



At the beginning it will be small and soft for lighting up the 'night' of the expectation of man.



From Sunday to Sunday it will always make it stronger.



Till the coming "in the world of true light, that which illuminates every man" (John 1,9).

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*Happy Advent!*



# SO-STARE CON

MICRO-PROJECT 2017 - Italy

*This year's Caritas project linked to the Advent path is in favor of the people affected by the earthquake, in Amatrice.*

## *The context*

Seven months after the seismic event, the first emergency housing solutions have been delivered and will let the people to stop the continuous relocations until the definitive one to their own houses. The need to be 'accompanied' in this new change is clear, especially in terms of listening and rebuilding the communities, starting with the attention of each event and situation of vulnerability.

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## *The project*

The project provides for the reorganization of the area previously destined only to the first need of goods distribution, in multipurpose terms:

- 🏠 A **small storage** to continue the distribution until the complete arrangement of the population in the emergency housing solutions, as agreed with the Municipality and other associations;
  - 🏠 A formal and informal **recreational area** for the diverse groups of population, made welcome by urban décor such as benches, tables, gazebos and covered by a tent;
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- 🏠 Installation of a **protected playing area** for children and mothers, prior to the approval of the Parish and the Civil Protection.

The project also provides for a **training activity** for the Caritas staff and volunteers (nuns, priests, monks, local volunteers) for the management of the activities and the style of presence at the Listening Centre, creating **working team** trained to intervene on the base of specific and continuously evolving exigencies.

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### ***Main objective***

Establishing the permanent Centre of Listening and Aggregation in Amatrice, described above, for creating new communitarian and unifying spaces in favor of the population, with particular attention to the most vulnerable groups (children and elderlies).

**Cost of the project: 77.000 €**

#### ***For donations:***

##### **IN PERSON**

At  
Caritas of the Diocese of Bergamo  
Via del Conventino, 8 - Bergamo  
(MON-FRI 9-12,30 / 14,30-18)

##### **BANK TRANSFER**

In favor of  
Caritas Diocesana Bergamasca  
Via Conventino, 8 - Bergamo  
On Credito Bergamasco  
Gruppo Banco Popolare  
Fil. Bergamo Malpensata  
IBAN:  
IT69E050341110500000006330

##### **BANK TRANSFER**

***To benefit the deductibility  
from taxable income of  
companies and people***

In favor of  
Associazione Diakonia Onlus  
UBI BANCA filiale  
P.zza Vitt. Veneto 8 - Bergamo  
IBAN:  
IT27Q031111101000000099169  
Stating as reason for payment:  
Progetto SO-STARE CON



#### ***For more information:***

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# FIRST WEEK

## *In the expectation of man*

You can desire to reach heaven, to try to touch the infinite. You can entrust to the stars the hopes, nostalgias, and the dreams that live in the hearts. The existence often seems to men like enshrouded in darkness, overwhelmed with evil. So it tempts you to lose faith in life. But Advent is a time that invites to look at things in the right way. To learn to see a light in the most dense darkness. To transform despondency into an expectation. And the strength of the expectation resides in the desire that feeds it and in which the Lord - that has provoked it - already lives. "Lord, you give light to my lamp; my God lights up my darkness" (Psalm 18, 29). It is time of lighting up the lamp of expectation and looking at the stars to discover that heaven is made near and the infinite is made flesh.

## SUNDAY 3 DECEMBER

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### *In the expectation of man*

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

### *From the Gospel according to Mark*

(13,35-37)

*At that time, Jesus said to his disciples: «Watch: you do not know when the master of the house will return, whether in the evening, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning; lest he will come suddenly and find you asleep. What I say to you, I say to all: ‘watch!’ »*

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### *We listen to a parish priest*

We live in the house of our body: his walls are our skin and the windows are the eyes, the ears... There is nothing more ours than our body, yet we did not make it by our own, it has been given us by mama and papa, and they have also welcomed it just like Mother Nature shaped it. We are our body, but our body is not ours. And so is life: it is entrusted to us, but it is not ours. If we are at least responsible, when something is loaned us, delivered an object that is not our ‘private property’ we make sure not to allow it to fall. We are wide awake for not combining woe. Or it can happen to us that we are tempted of making ourselves masters, it wins us the desire of having a binge and then falling asleep. Sleeping for resting is necessary to be present when awake, but living just like a man asleep, in other words lazy or dizzy for too much revelry, that is wasting the gift of life.

*Fr. Andrea*

### *We Pray Together*

We expect your birth Jesus.  
We expect it like the dawn!  
Grant us a docile and mild heart,  
capable of expecting  
in the desire of having you later among us.

### *Our Father*

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## MONDAY 4 DECEMBER

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

### ***In the expectation of a young person***

I always like to study and I did it with passion and dedication until the end of the Bachelor's degree and the Master's degree. I have had excellent results and also satisfaction, that has paid my toil. And now? Now it is my turn to expect! To expect, to finally have a job. It is not a passive expectation: questions, interviews, competitions, internships... I am always busy and I expect sooner or later some positive answers, some opportunities for

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me and finally a job. I would prefer to look for a job in Italy and not to be forced to move to another nation, even if I don't want to rule it out... Sometimes I get despondent and think that many sacrifices and commitments go in vain: maybe it wasn't worth it. Yet I would not like to lose hope. I don't want to give up and waive my future!

*Luca*

### ***We Pray together***

We are expecting your birth, Jesus,  
we are expecting it with confidence.  
Even if sometimes it is difficult and we get  
disappointed.  
We would like to expect it with tenacity, with  
courage,  
together with who looks ahead to the future,  
without fear and pessimism,  
without surrendering!

### ***Our Father***

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## TUESDAY 5 DECEMBER

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

### ***In the expectation of a sick person***

It is fifteen months that I am suffering, inside and outside the hospitals, a consultation behind the other and the usual phrase that accompanies me: “Your sickness is curable, but we must expect to complete the diagnostic exams to have the whole picture”. And so consultation after consultation, expectation after expectation, my curable sickness has not yet started to be cured... And the preoccupation incre-

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ases in me and in the ones who are next to me! Sometimes I am already resigned when I go to the umpteenth doctor’s appointment: “In any case, I say to myself, there won’t be any novelty...” What bothers me the most in all this story is not much of my state of health, but this exhausting expectation that doesn’t permit me to be serene with myself and with others... then, nevertheless, I try to get over it and I convince myself that every expectation has a completion, otherwise what an expectation would it be?

*Gianfranco*

### ***We Pray Together***

We are expecting your birth Jesus,  
we expect it with apprehension,  
we expect it like the sick who are expecting  
the right cure to get well;  
we expect it with much hope,  
the hope of a good and beautiful time  
to live for us and for the others.

### ***Our Father***

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## WEDNESDAY 6 DECEMBER

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

### *In the expectation of an old lady*

I've been a widow for sixteen years: after 48 years of marriage life, my husband has gone, a bad illness took him away. I had dreamed of living with him till the end, but the Lord has decided in a different way. My two sons are married and, in their turn, they have already grown children...I am almost a great-grandmother from my first niece. I live in my house and a madam from Romania stays with me. My days are

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equal to the other: I go out only to go to Mass in the morning and then I spend all the rest of the day at home. I do not miss anything, if not the possibility of having a chat with my sons, with my nephews, with some friendly persons... The days are long, they never pass; sometimes I look through the window to see the people passing, in the hope of crossing to look for someone that I know: the moka is always ready for a good coffee...

*Lisa*

### *We Pray Together*

We are expecting your birth Jesus,  
we are expecting it with anxiety.  
Most times the solitude  
leaves us sad and gloomy,  
we shut ourselves in the four walls.  
We would like to learn to expect together  
with our brothers,  
above all with those that are more than  
others,  
they seem to be forgotten.

### *Our Father*

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## THURSDAY 7 DECEMBER

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

### *In the expectation of an adolescent*

When I was at the elementary school, if someone asked, “What would you like to do when you are grown up?” The response was immediate: “A footballer!”; at pre-secondary school I already changed my idea, maybe I would have liked to be a mechanic, or maybe a cook, or maybe an animator in a touristic village, or maybe a computer programmer... They all told me not to be in haste to decide, to wait, to look,

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to understand... And so I enrolled at ‘School for Surveyors’ without any desire to become a surveyor... I however sought to study and to keep myself busy; now few months remain to conclude, but “what would I like to do when I am grown up?” Boh!!!! Would I like to enroll to university? Boh!!!! ...but what university...? Boh!!! Would you like to start to work immediately? Boh!!!! Some friends that I confided in my confusion responded to me that their dream is just of enjoying life, all the way... Boh!!!! This thing does not convince me... I am expecting a light, a word, a sign...

*Davide*

### **We Pray Together**

We are expecting your birth Jesus,  
we expect it with impatience.  
We are expecting with all the boys  
that are expecting their own future,  
we are expecting it  
with the disoriented adolescents,  
we are expecting it with certainty  
that no dream,  
no delusion will be lost.

### **Our Father**

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## FRIDAY 8 DECEMBER

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

### ***In the expectation of a mother***

I am now in my fifth month of my first pregnancy. What an emotion! After the first time of a little exhaustion, with nauseas, tiredness, apprehension for the first ultrasounds, now I am fine and I can taste day after day the expectation of a baby that will be born. But, a baby boy or a baby girl? I do not know but I am content that it is so: it will be a surprise! Sometimes I try to imagine as it will be, his face, his smiles... Will he

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resemble me or his father? What name shall I give to him? It seems dreaming! But it is not only a dream: I hear his movements in the baby bump, it is a reality. Some fears of the future sometimes attack me: will it be healthy? Will the labour go well? Will I be able to take care of him as a real mother? But the joy of a new life is stronger than every fear and preoccupation.

*Francesca*

### ***We Pray Together***

We expect your birth, Jesus,  
we expect it with emotion and together  
with big joy.

We expect it with amazement,  
dreaming it a little  
like many mothers in their expectation  
of a child.

We want to prepare us at Your coming,  
make room for you,  
open our heart to make it  
day after day more attentive and watchful.  
So will your arrival be a true joy!

### ***Our Father***

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## SATURDAY 9 DECEMBER

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

### ***In the expectation of a couple of fiancé***

We know each other from different years, since high school times, when we had started to frequent each other and to go out together. Well then, our story has started and went ahead, it is consolidated, it is reinforced. We grew up together in love and our love grew up with us at the point of not desiring to leave each other anymore, of planning our life together and deciding to marry. We finally found a job and a flat fitting our needs resources. Now it is the

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turn to pay the mortgage payments but this doesn't scare us: we put some sacrifices in the account. After we have talked at length, we decided not to live together to keep living with our families until the wedding day. Now that we have fixed the date for next year, let us count the days that are left to realize our dream!

*Anna and Pietro*

### ***We Pray Together***

We are expecting your birth, Jesus,  
we are expecting it with passion,  
like those in love  
that can't wait to stay together forever.  
We are expecting it with conviction  
that the great plans can be realized,  
if we really believe and if we commit  
ourselves!

### ***Our Father***

IN THE STORIES OF DAILY LIFE...

*voices from Amatrice*

## THE HOUSE



*House is the place of the heart of each one, it is the protected space where to rest, to love, to welcome guests.*

*House is my bedroom, it is the table, it is the burning fireplace or the wide open window.*

*House is the shelter for the sad days, it is the place of feasting for the days of celebrations.*

*The house, after the earthquake, has been lost by many. We always miss our own house, but we miss it especially at the sun set when the voices are doze off and only the green light at the bottom of the tent is on, the only light that seems to keep watching a future that will arrive and we must be ready to start again and reconstruct the House.*

PER PREGARE CON I PIÙ PICCOLI

*Nell'immagine della settimana, che trovi a pagina 10, una piccola lampada è tenuta tra le mani dell'uomo che aspetta. Qual è? Colorala con il tuo colore preferito per farla diventare un pò anche tua.*





# SECOND WEEK

## *In the prophesy of Isaiah*

Resound the old prophesy of Isaiah, with which the evangelist Mark opens his gospel. Jesus is the fulfillment of a promise, his coming is the completion of a path already undertaken, pronounced distinctly from the words of the prophets. As a watchman, Isaiah appears from the tower to see the sun that rises in the horizon and to announce it. With courage he draws his words, he throws them in the silence of the first lights of the day, so that they may resound strongly and wake the hearts up. The prophet lives in the soft aurora, faithful and steady in the proper place of sighting. He stayed awake all night long, talking and repeating, listening and listening over again to the questions of those who keep asking: “Watchman, how much longer the night?” (Isaiah 21, 11).

# SUNDAY 10 DECEMBER

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## *In the prophesy of Isaiah*

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

## ***From the Gospel according to Mark***

*(1,1-3)*

*The beginning of the gospel of  
Jesus Christ the Son of God. As it is  
written in the Book of the prophet  
Isaiah: Behold, I am sending my  
messenger ahead of you: he will  
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## ***We listen to a parish priest***

Our life does not start from zero. Neither that of Jesus: at the beginning of his gospel there is the presence of who prepares him the way. When a birth is expected, we prepare ourselves for its arrival: the joyful and enthusiastic commitment in preparing the welcome measures the desire of the expectation and it is already prophesy. Preparing is giving time, head, heart, and hands. Preparing the way is not tightening between suffocating arms, but welcoming in hands that teach you how to walk. And hands that let him talk, who is coming towards us, that let him talk, that let him meet us. Because to stay physically next to one another is not enough to meet the other; you can also stay near for an entire life without sharing anything. It can straighten the footpaths by communicating in a more direct and straight way, by talking in an outspoken way but not with a tongue that cuts deeper than the sword, behaving with a candidness and transparency that is not impudence and intrusive.

*Fr. Andrew*

## ***We Pray Together***

Lord, with hope we look to the future, with the same hope that many prophets have demonstrated, confiding in You and in your promise of love. Lord, with hope we look to the future, knowing that you never deceive who attends to you with sincere heart.

***Our Father***

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## MONDAY 11 DECEMBER

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

### ***In the prophesy of a journalist***

I am a journalist. A job that each day makes me think. The pages of crime news, the dramas that go through the life of men strike every day in the stomach and in the heart. But the mission of the journalist is maybe only that of dyeing the readers' days black? Such an awful job would it be. There's no escaping to the news, the facts are objective and, in my job, they put me in touch with concrete life, sometimes with the pain, many times with hope. Many

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times I got real hope from where everything seemed to be dark. Families that in a tragedy have known how to generate seeds of good, of charity, of future, in the silence and patient texture of little stories of domestic Gospel. Information, also when across the roads of drama, can recognize the possible roads to narrate the power of good. This is what I ask every day to my job.

*Monica*

### ***We Pray Together***

Lord,  
with hope we look at the future.  
A future that, even if it is painted with the gloomiest colours  
by the news,  
we expect with much hope.  
May the expectation of your birth  
fill us with the light of our daily life  
so that we can learn to narrate  
the power of good.

***Our Father***

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## TUESDAY 12 DECEMBER

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

### ***In the prophesy of a missionary***

When I went for the first time for a visit in the land that would have hosted me for some years of missionary service, my eyes and my heart still couldn't recognize the beauty, the strength and the culture of that corner of the world. It would have required months for me to be capable of recognizing small signs of beauty and care that would have given me a more conscious glance. For me, to take notice of so much richness, was necessary to stop, pause,

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wait and observe, getting rid of every prejudice. With time, I understood that the strength and the richness of the people with whom I was living my mission came from the story, culture and arts, that they themselves and their ancestors had created and with which they regenerated themselves day after day in their everyday life, made of patient work, silences, prayer and meeting. I now realize, being distant from these places, how each corner, each glance, each event continually talk to me about a present God that makes every man capable to realize his history.

*Fr. Giovanni*

### ***We Pray Together***

Lord,  
with hope we look to the future.  
In it we recognize your forbearing  
and caring presence,  
that shaped man,  
sustained relationships,  
gave value to capacities and inclinations...  
May each man catch sight of his future in a story  
marked of your presence.

### ***Our Father***

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## WEDNESDAY 13 DECEMBER

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

### ***In the prophesy of a politician***

Dear friends, I am happy to write you this experience that is changing my life or, at least, it is overturning it a lot. I am by now in my third year of administration. For three years I carry out the role of councilman in my municipality: I do Politics. Politics for me is like a vocation, a strong desire of being of service to my fellow citizens. For a Christian, politics is to do Charity, that is taking care of the other—and it is not my saying, Pope Paul VI said it. If you

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look at the news it seems the opposite, but if those who do politics at all levels would be aware of it, everything would be very easier! Politics is Charity and I realize it every day. To be councilman, in my own case, means resolving the citizens' problems on daily bases. To do politics means to be of service, to love your own city. The love for man is only a bet that God makes with us. For this reason, taking care of the men, of their problems and administrating a city is the way that I found to thank God for the gift that he gave me: Life  
*Giacomo*

### ***We Pray Together***

Lord,  
with hope we look to the future;  
it is the hope that is born from certainty  
of which it listens to the love of God  
through many persons that each day  
they take care of man.  
The expectation of your birth  
supports us in this path of charity.

### ***Our Father***

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## THURSDAY 14 DECEMBER

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

### ***In the prophecy of a priest***

Any time that I prepare myself in the sacristy for the Celebration of the Mass, my mind goes to the words that my grandfather told me the day of my First Mass: “Remember that the people expect from you that you make them know a God that is really present in their lives, that does not take away the hard work, but that shares it, that doesn’t push the tears away, but wipes them away, that would like that each man has a serene life”. How much wisdom

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is there in this simple man of little more than 80 years... The more the years pass by and the more I give consideration that my grandfather was right: the God of Jesus Christ that we preach and announce lives in the folds of the story of each person, he is not far away, he is not indifferent, but he is there, to take a fulfillment of the covenant with each one. To let the people meet this God is my ministry.

*Fr. Marco*

### ***We Pray Together***

Lord,  
with hope we look to the future;  
we look to it with that serenity  
that comes from certainty of your presence  
in the life of each of us!  
And we are expecting it with anxiety:  
it will be the fullness of the fulfillment  
of the covenant.

### ***Our Father***

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## FRIDAY 15 DECEMBER

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

### ***In the prophesy of a historian***

It is true, every morning we are bombarded with bad news, in the newspapers, on television, on the radio and online. It seems that evil, violence, injustice prevail and this makes our contemporary men and women passive, resigned and pessimistic. Over the centuries, over the millennia man makes the same mistakes, not learning from previous experiences, not welcoming the precise enlightening teachings of history. If he allows himself to

*The beginning  
of the gospel of  
Jesus Christ  
the Son of God.  
As it is written  
in the Book of  
the prophet  
Isaiah: Behold,  
I am sending  
my messenger  
ahead of you:  
he will prepare  
your way. A  
voice of one  
crying out in  
the desert:  
'Prepare the  
way of the  
Lord, make  
straight his  
paths.'*

be led by the history that has preceded him, he could avoid repeating many errors... Let us try, however, to open the eyes well, above all, those of the heart: we will discover small signs, seeds of good, that each day in the more varied situations many persons plant with confidence and hope, contrasting evil and making good to grow, constructing little by little a better world.

*Filippo*

### ***We Pray Together***

Lord,  
with hope we look to the future,  
with the same confidence of who scatters  
seeds of good,  
without pretense of finding  
the fruit immediately,  
but with the certainty that first  
or then it will grow.

Lord,  
with hope we look to the future,  
upholding us with one another,  
believing in a better world,  
that small contribution can already build up.

### ***Our Father***

## SATURDAY 16 DECEMBER

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

### ***In the prophesy of a teacher***

By now I have taught for many years in secondary schools and I can say of knowing, at least a little, the adolescents. When I talk about my work with other adults, more or less my peers, I hear: “But how do you make it? That is the worst age! The pupils do not listen to you, they are not interested, they do not study...”. I do not agree: teaching together with educating are maybe the best job. Certainly, you have to communicate with the pupils, listen to them, know how to understand their most profound desi-

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the desert:  
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straight his  
paths’.*

res. Foreseeing beyond their attitudes of rebellion, of defiance, of impatience, their desire of life, of authenticity, of great values, of broad horizons that they search above all in watching at us adults.

You also have to expect, and especially to watch the adolescent and their abilities and resources with a trusting eye. This is the first step to succeed in communicating with them, hence to teach.

*Lorenzo*

### ***We Pray Together***

Lord,  
with hope we look to the future,  
as the teacher that knows how to attend  
and give confidence to pupils,  
foreseeing their dreams  
and helping them to realize them.

Lord,  
with hope we look to the future,  
convinced that the great values exist again,  
They can teach, learn and live together.

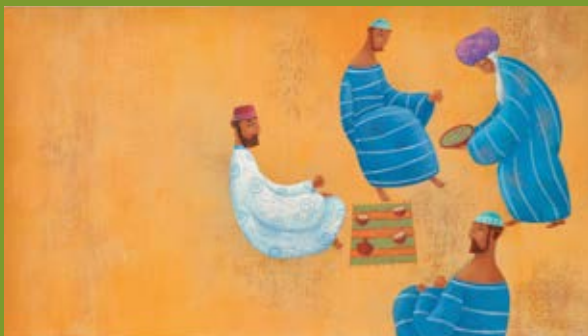
### ***Our Father***

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IN THE STORIES OF DAILY LIFE...

*voices from Amatrice*

## HABITS

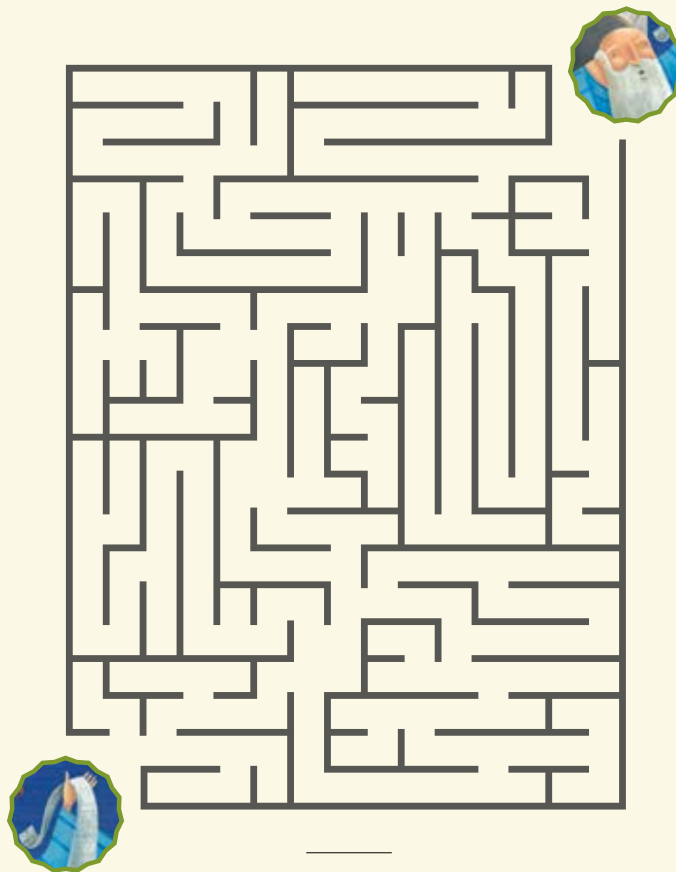


*Wake up, open the windows, prepare coffee, go to the bathroom, call the others, breakfast all together. The sun starts to be seen and you are ready for another day.*

*Since we are displaced the habits are not equal anymore, the light of the morning sun is not prophesy of a day similar to the previous ones. Habits are missing, the quiet ritual of your time is missing. Only now I give consideration of how precious were the habits of the house.*

PER PREGARE CON I PIÙ PICCOLI

*Come troviamo la strada giusta? Le parole di mamma e papà ci aiutano ogni giorno, anche Dio ha qualcosa da dirci. Parti dall'immagine di Isaia e, con una matita, trova la via verso il roto della legge.*





# THIRD WEEK

## *In the words of John the Baptist*

John the Baptist is the witness of light. Every word and every gesture is a testimony made to light. If ancient prophecies are a dawn that preaches today, he is “the lamp that burns and shines” (Jn 5,35). He offers his face to light. From Sundays to Sundays, darkness shrinks. Gradually the earth is illuminated by the “true light, the one that enlightens every man” (Jn 1: 9). Today the testimony of John the Baptist burns and shines in front of our eyes. His words are fire: warm hearts, sometimes burning and enlightening, make clear the way to go to meet the Lord who comes. Words and gestures that reveal that he has always been turned to light and pointed it firmly and perseveringly. So much so that the one who looked at him felt obliged to turn his gaze to the one John was just witnessing.



# SUNDAY 17 DECEMBER

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## *In the words of John the Baptist*

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

### ***From the Gospel according to John*** (1,6-8)

*A man named John was sent by  
God. He came for testimony, to  
testify to the light, so that all might  
believe through him.  
He was not the light,  
but came to testify to the light.*

---

*A man named  
John was  
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He came  
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testimony,  
to testify  
to the light,  
so that all  
might believe  
through him.  
He was not  
the light,  
but came  
to testify  
to the  
light*

## ***We listen to a parish priest***

John the Baptist is the witness of light. He is not the light, does not shine with his own light, he is not a stage star, he is not a star. The light is Jesus and John testifies to Him, preparing and inviting Him to prepare His way, interrogating Him, pointing to Him among us. The witness does not show himself, he does not speak of himself, but offers himself as a brush in the hands of a painter, such as a flute in the mouth and fingers of a flutist, like a transparent crystal in the light. John does not add to himself as an example to imitate, but is delivered as a clear glass crossed by light, as a witness of Jesus. We rightly say that giving the example is worth more than saying many words, but being a witness is far more than giving the example. In giving the example to self-exaltation, witnessing itself gives itself as an instrument, as a humble servant, among many others, precious and defective like everyone else.

*Fr. Andrew*

## ***We pray together***

Lord, we want to be credible witnesses.  
Like the Baptist we want to talk about you through the coherence of life and the and sincerity of words. In this waiting time makes even more witnesses of light which is already present in the world.

***Our Father***

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## MONDAY 18 DECEMBER

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

### ***In the words of a healthcare worker***

I am a healthcare worker and I work in the Department of Oncology of a Bergamo hospital. It is not always easy for me to be “a witness to light” with the sick I meet: their state of fragility, suffering, and insecurity, sometimes envelops them with such a “dark shadow” that it is difficult to see on their faces the signs of hope and expectation. Despite the frantic pace of work, I try to stand beside them in the belief that a word or gesture of proximity and encour-

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to the light,  
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the light,  
but came  
to testify  
to the  
light*

agement or a spiritual joke at the right moment sometimes alleviates more pain than a drug therapy. A phrase read by chance on Facebook has impressed me very much and I am convinced that it is very true: The walls of the hospitals listen to more prayers than the walls of the Churches... who works there knows that... that is why over the head we put our heart .

*Matteo*

### ***Let us pray together***

Lord, we want to be credible witnesses, witnesses to your tenderness towards those who live in moments of struggle; witnesses of hope for those who from life they no longer expect anything.

### ***Our Father***

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## TUESDAY 19 DECEMBER

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

### ***In the words of an educator***

The community is a big family, or at least wants to be such, with the characteristics that a family generally possesses. Of course, there are no parents and children but people who play the same role: on the one hand, significant adult figures, on the other guys and girls who are trying to grow and find themselves. Very important are the relationships between them: the more they are based on esteem and confidence, the greater the communication and the positive climate inside. As an educator in

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to testify  
to the  
light*

these years, I have seen many boys and girls coming to the community and so many of them have stopped by us several years, so to create profound, authentic knowledge, built little by little sometimes with great effort, but also so much satisfaction . In fact, the care, the affection, the attention of the single person gives fruit, thus succeeding in recovering, at least a little, how many of them have missed infancy and adolescence. Love makes miracles!

*Stefano*

### ***Let us pray together***

Lord,  
we want to be credible witnesses,  
with the faith of the educator  
and it spends generously on others,  
especially for those in distress.  
We want to be credible witnesses,  
who know how to spread a little of your Light  
and illuminate the dark situations that so  
many people live in.

### ***Our Father***

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## WEDNESDAY 20 DECEMBER

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

### *In the words of a catechist*

It's beautiful to be with the kids! They always amaze you with their transparency and simplicity. Of course, it is often difficult to capture their attention, to engage them in various activities; also because today's children are awake, hyperactive, premature for so many aspects, so more demanding than previous years. Catechism is therefore more challenging but can be an opportunity to get involved, to be more coherent, to find new ways, new languages to communicate your faith in Jesus

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the light,  
but came  
to testify  
to the  
light*

and to bear witness to it. Children especially look at you: how are you, how you behave, how you live, more than what you say or suggest and see us well! You are therefore important to them: through you they can pass a few radios of that Light that is the Lord and they can experience them.

*Stefania*

### *Let us pray together*

Lord,  
we want to be credible witnesses,  
capable of communicating in a true way,  
looking for different styles  
and new words to do so.

We want to be credible witnesses,  
striving to be consistent,  
because our life is not far from what  
we believe and say.

Make us transparent from the Light  
that comes from You!

### *Our Father*

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## THURSDAY 21 DICEMBRE

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

### *In the words of a youth*

“No matter what you do, what matters is the love and passion you transmit in every gesture”. This was the advice that sustained me during the missionary experience in Cambodia and it is precisely from here that I felt a new courage to be born in me to welcome all that the mission gave me and then look for “put it back into circulation”. After meeting with missionary nuns and their faith so lively I said, “I too would like to convey the same enthusiasm”. With this renewed spirit, I have come into play in

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light*

the path with the diocesan missionary center, the young group, the new social studies because a precious gift such as mission cannot be silenced, if it will ruin the beauty. Instead, the testimony keeps the missionary flame alive in the heart, enriching it with meetings and faces behind which I now see the presence of Him who always accompanies us.

*Alessandra*

### *Let us pray together*

Lord,  
we want to be credible witnesses,  
“daily” witnesses of passion  
and love for man;  
witnesses of an encounter with you  
who always renews, supports,  
accompanies our lives.

### *Our Father*

---

## FRIDAY 22 DECEMBER

---

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

### ***In the words of a nun***

What is the point of being nun today? I try to answer this question that I was asked by a teenager a few weeks ago, by telling you about myself. For some years I have chosen to serve in a reception house that, as the term itself says, “welcomes” those who mostly need help, assistance, protection, or perhaps just a place to feel at home. They are very different people: men, women, boys, Italians or foreigners, who live in critical situations because they have lost everything, escaped from persecution, war, hunger and asked for a hand. They

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to the  
light*

need a roof, a shower, a hot meal, a friend's face ... I and other sisters we make available to meet the first needs personally or through a network of solidarity. We are convinced that restoring dignity to men and women who have been deprived of it makes our world more human.

*Sister Angela*

### ***Let us pray together***

Lord,  
we want to be credible witnesses,  
with the great faith of those who welcome  
men and women  
like brothers and sisters,  
seeing in their faces You and their  
sufferings your cross.  
We want to be credible witnesses,  
present, available,  
who know how to donate something free  
for them.

***Our Father***

---

## SATURDAY 23 DECEMBER

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

### *In the words of one who sees in the stranger the face of God*

If I had not known them, what kind of Christian would I be now? “What are you doing?” “I’m an educator, a social worker, especially with immigrant people.” “Ah, of course, those who come here to kill us, or if it’s okay to steal and to sell illegally, to rub our jobs because they get payed off the books!” It’s not like that, but even if it was, for me they are people, faces, stories, joys, sufferings, smiles, tears, hugs, brass and quarrels. They are friends who make sen-

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light*

se of my life. They are Ahmed, Bouba, Isabel, Issaka, Soukaina, Said, Pamj, Kolthum, Serghy, Malika ... They are Christians, Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Atheists ... They are men and women every day that make me realize that witnessing to Christ means being deeply human. Otherwise why would God ever become Man? It is in them, especially in them, that I recognize the humanity of Jesus. And above all they give me the opportunity to say, with what I do, that Christ is here for all mankind.

*Elena*

### *Let us pray together*

Lord,  
we want to be credible witnesses,  
witnesses of a love  
that has no color boundaries,  
that does not raise walls of hatred,  
that does not hide behind a mean  
indifference...  
we want to be witnesses of a love  
able to see in the face of every man  
and woman,  
the face of Jesus

### *Our Father*

---

IN THE STORIES OF DAILY LIFE...

*voices from Amatrice*

## PHOTOS AND RECORDS



*Is there an antidote to sadness? Yes, the memories!  
Whether they are shared chats, daydreams and travels  
in the past with memory, memories are placebo for a  
sense of loneliness and discomfort that is often breathed  
amongst us displaced. Among the rubbles of our house,  
dust and debris, I found the family photo album, they  
seemed to shine with light. I sat with my family and to-  
gether we browsed the album remembering all the good  
past moments, those photos were a testimony of a happy  
past and a certainty that together we will overcome also  
this disorientation.*

PER PREGARE CON I PIÙ PICCOLI

*Anche tu, bambino, puoi essere un testimone?  
Essere testimone vuol dire aver visto qualcosa o  
aver conosciuto qualcuno e poterlo raccontare ad altri.  
Usa questo spazio per disegnare qualcosa di bello  
che hai visto o conosciuto.*





# FOURTH WEEK

## *In the yes of Mary*

A gentle light spills into the room. She caresses Mary's face, she sits on her hand, which looks healthy and holds someone together. The house of the young Nazareth shines like the sun. The walls reflect what is happening in Mary's heart and womb, which has become the cradle of God's splendor. Mary has her eyes closed, almost keeping in mind the extraordinary announcement she has received. At her lap she sticks a luscious white flower, scented. The young man breathes deeply his strong scent. His chest, his lungs are filled with divine beauty. A smile is born on her face: the most beautiful way of welcoming God's will. The perfume of the gospel fills it and the light of grace surrounds her; his body becomes the home of the Word that will become flesh.

# SUNDAY 24 DECEMBER

---

## *In the yes of Mary*

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

### ***From the Gospel according to Luke***

(1,34-35.38)

*But Mary said to the angel: «How can this be, since I have no relations with a man?». And the angel said to her 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» [...]. Mary said: «Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word». Then the angel departed from her.*

---

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## ***We listen to the parish priest***

In the announcement of the angel Gabriele, God proposes without imposing. The initiative is all his, but everything depends on Mary's consent. God makes the first step, but does not enter without knocking. It is the Lord who hosts Mary covering it with the light of her shadow, and it is Mary who welcomes the Lord in the womb of her heart. The Lord is the house of Mary and Mary is the home of Jesus. Mary is the mother of God and the daughter of her Son. In this reciprocity, life sprouts. Love is to give and receive, it is the generosity of hospitality and the humility of seeking hospitality. If there is more joy in giving than in receiving, to give the joy of giving, you must be willing to humbly receive what is given to us. And, inversely, in order not to fall into the logic for which it is easier to receive than to give, the Lord gives us the pleasure of giving, the joy of giving is sweeter than the convenience of receiving.

*Fr. Andrew*

## ***Let us pray together***

Lord, we await you with patience and joy.  
We want to make our heart warm,  
ready to pronounce the yes, like the heart of Mary,  
which turned out to be fully available to your coming.  
O Lord, we wait your birth impatiently  
and with joy!

***Our Father***

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IN THE STORIES OF DAILY LIFE...

*voices from Amatrice*

## RELATIONS



*The neighbors in the common imagination are almost only objects of gossip or complaint.*

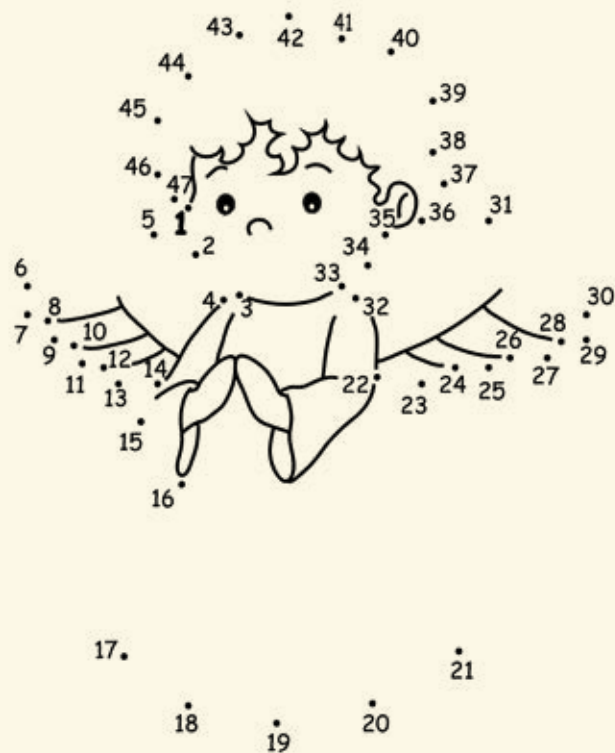
*When you*

*find them out from today till tomorrow, you are distracted, disoriented, almost as a point of reference. After all, I have always taken for granted so many small gestures that I miss really much now. There was Maria who with her seventy years taught me the recipe for the true sauce and then brought me that rosemary sprig that today is a huge bush. Peter her husband brought my kids all the summers into the henhouse to count the eggs without using their fingers to make additions. Then there was who used to water my plants, who would watch after my children if I was ironing, who rang my doorbell because the dog had run away ...*

*It will be difficult not to find them, but the neighbors will invite them to a lunch, often maybe very often.*

PER PREGARE CON I PIÙ PICCOLI

*Unisci i puntini con un pennarello del colore che più ti piace e scopri così l'immagine nascosta. Un piccolo indizio? Il suo nome è Gabriele.*





# CHRISTMAS

## *In the midst of us*

A whole city shines like the sun. “On those who lived in the dark earth a light shone” (Is 9: 1). Earth and sky shine, united by the same glow. Stars and houses radiate a powerful light. The Son of God came “to dwell in our midst” (Jn 1,14). Jesus is the Emmanuel, the God with us. The daily life of man is now inhabited by the glory of God. With his incarnation, Jesus entered history, in that of the world and in that of every man. Every person is the true crib, it is a home inhabited by the presence of Jesus. In front of everyone’s eyes, “His glory, glory as Father’s only begotten, full of grace and truth” shines forth “(Jn 1,14).

The true glory of Christmas is the immersion of God in history, his search for a home among the houses, making his mortal flesh like the flesh of each one.

# MONDAY 25 DECEMBER

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## *In the midst of us*

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

### ***From the Gospel according to John***

(1,14)

*And the Word became  
flesh and made his dwelling  
among us; and we saw his glory,  
the glory as  
of the Father's only Son,  
full of grace and truth.*

---

*And the  
Word  
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## ***We listen to the parish priest***

The Word becoming flesh, that is, making God a man, comes to live among us. In the middle does not mean the center, if by center we mean the point around which everything and all rotate. Not in the luxurious central pole, but in the periphery Jesus is born. In the middle means as any, as God between us and not above us. And coming to meet us equal, like one of us, does not conquer us with the power that is imposed from above the skies, but attracts us from the bottom of the manger with the weakness and tenderness of the flesh of a newborn. Jesus is unique not because he is a superhuman, but because he is supremely human, full of grace, that is gratitude and gratuity. Full of that merciful and pitiful love, persevering and patient, which is at the root of the eternal alliance God has decided for us. Faithful and unshakeable love in which the truth lies: the truth of love that makes our life true.

*Fr. Andrew*

## ***Let us pray together***

You have arrived and you're in the midst of us!  
We are happy, we finally found your home,  
your residence, your being in the midst of men.  
You are here and you will always be with us:  
your home is our family, our friends, schoolmates,  
colleagues at work. Stay with us forever!

***Our Father***

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# EPIPHANY

## *On the journey of the Magi*

“The Lord is shining upon you, and his glory is upon you. People will walk to your light, the kings to the splendor of your rising” (Is 60: 2-3). Days are pervaded with light. The birth of Jesus fills the world of a celestial glow and spreads on the face of men the glory of God the Father. Also on the face of the Magi. They met the King they were looking for. The wickedness of a child has flooded the darkness of hearts with light. The Magi, who have drawn to the light of Bethlehem, become signs and bearers. Like the Magi, every man receives the task of illuminating the earth, drawing on the one and true light. Our journey took place between two lamps. The first is fueled by the oil of God’s desire; the second from the oil of faith in the incarnate God. The first one accompanied the vigil, the second one will guide the testimony.

# SATURDAY 6 JANUARY

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## *On the journey of the Magi*

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

### ***From the Gospel according to Matthew***

(2,11-12)

*On entering the house they saw the child with Mary his mother. They prostrated themselves and did him homage. Then they opened their treasures and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they departed for their country by another way.*

---

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and myrrh.  
And having  
been warned  
in a dream  
not to return  
to Herod, they  
departed for  
their country by*

### ***We listen to the parish priest***

The magi are from far away: it is along the journey to Bethlehem. But the journey made by Jesus to which their journey ends is even longer. The magi arrived from the far east, Jesus from the highest of the heavens. The stars are the place of origin and the stable of Bethlehem is the landing place of its journey. For Jesus to go from the stars to the stable is not the sad outcome of a ruinous fall, but blossom of a desired fall. The Magi and Jesus were far away but now they are very close, they can be hugged. Even when we are born neighbors, to really embrace, that is, to really give and receive, one must make a long journey: what makes us pass by embracing to possess the embrace, opening us like a gift box; the casket of the one who presents the gold of his riches, the incense of his desires, and the myrrh of his sufferings. And the greatness of the encounter becomes a gift for returning at home...

*Fr. Andrew*

### ***Let us pray together***

O Lord, we have met you,  
we recognized you ...  
Like the Magi  
we also resume our daily walk  
with the illuminated and renewed heart .

### ***Our Father***

---





*The true light,  
which enlightens everyone,  
was coming  
into the world.*

*(John 1,9)*