

realpeople

the gospel in everyday language



Today's readings:

We the clay, you the potter. Is 63:16-17; 64:1,3-8
I never stop thanking God. 1 Cor 1:3-9
Stay awake! Mk 13:33-37

Next week:

Make straight the paths of the Lord.
Is 40:1-5,9-11; 2 Pet 3:8-14;
Mk 1:1-8

In a nutshell

With the great celebration of Christmas not far away, Advent is a time for renewing our lives in the spirit of the gospel. As we prepare to celebrate with family and friends, let's stay awake to opportunities for self-giving and prayer, conversion and change. Let's make this a memorable Christmas.



Shopping with a difference

Last Advent a young couple with a 6-month-old-child wrote this letter to their extended family.

Hello from us and happy Advent! We are writing to share with you our Christmas plans, and to invite you to join us. To break the back of commercialism in this holy season we are limiting our Christmas shopping to gifts under \$10. Kids are an exception (that's anyone under the age of 15 for those claiming to be big kids!) The plan is to keep things simple.

The money we are not spending on gifts will be given to the Sisters in our local parish to assist with their missionary work with families in poverty-stricken areas overseas and in remote parts of Australia. We have chosen them because a) we know them and some of our friends are connected with their work, b) because we know they really need the funds, and the funds will get to their destination and make a

difference to people's lives. We will be giving them the donation on the feast of the Holy Family. This is our Christmas gift to families in need.

We are conscious of your generosity in giving us Christmas gifts over the years; so if you are thinking of buying us a gift this year, we invite you to give that money to these Sisters instead. What's really important is that you do what you wish! We have chosen a plan that feels true to us, but we are not putting expectations on anyone else. Everyone has their own way of making Christmas special.

So feel free to join us (or not), modify the plan, proceed as usual or do something completely different - it's up to you!

We look forward to sharing this holy season with you.

Lots of love,
(C & S)

What will you do 'differently' this Advent?

Uncluttered joy

One of my strongest Christmas memories is that of my neighbours from a previous residence.

There were a loving family: a faithful young couple with four children under eight. Unemployment and financial problems had hit them hard. Theirs was one home to which Santa was battling to make a house call that year.

Yet, as a visitor on Christmas Day, I was struck by the spirit of uncomplicated joy that reigned in their home. Faces aglow with

excitement, their children proudly showed me their tiny gifts... a monster-shaped pencil eraser, some coloured marbles, a super-hero sticker... gifts worth no more than a few dollars placed at the base of a scantily decorated pot plant, yet received with boundless enthusiasm.

I saw the gospel spirit of poverty revealing riches. (Anne)



Think . Talk

- What does Christmas mean to you?
- Share one important Christmas memory. Why is this memory important to you?
- Who needs your help, care and love this Christmas?

Pray . Act

- How will I make this Christmas different and special? (What prayer shall I offer? What action shall I plan? What gifts of love shall I give?)

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RealPeople offers faith reflections from the saints and prophets of everyday life.