

# **THE PARISH OF THE IMMACULATE HEART OF MARY**

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## THREE CHRISTMAS WORDS: GO! ADORE! GIVE YOUR HEART! By Fr David May

On the Scripture readings for Christmas, there are so many words that are in the superlative—as in: “the highest”. I thought to review those words, to let them soak in a bit more in order to convey something of what this feast is conveying to us, is giving to us and to the whole Church.

“The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light”; “their gladness is greater”; their joy increases”. “The Child born for us is named Wonder Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. Wide is his dominion”; “a peace that has no end”; “and his throne will be established from this time onwards and forever”.

And then in the Gospel: I noticed it’s Caesar Augustus—not Julius, not Nero; for this occasion we need Augustus. In “the whole world” a census will be taken. “Everyone” goes to his own home town. Then we have the shepherds, and the angels appear to them. It says here that “they were terrified”, but what it literally says is: They were frightened with a great fear—a “mega” fear. And the angel says, “Do not be afraid. I bring you news of ‘mega’ joy. The only solution for mega fear is mega joy! “A joy to be shared by the whole people”, all the people. And they give the sign: the Baby, and so forth. “A great throng”—not just a small contingent—was sent to sing; “A great throng of the heavenly host”; “Glory to God in the highest heavens.”



So we see that the inspired writers, whose writings are chosen for this feast, are speaking in the superlative. And yet it all hinges around—the diminutive, the small. Isn’t that interesting.

There’s one refrain in the Gospel that’s repeated twice: “She wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger.” And then when the angels say to the shepherds, “There will be a sign for you”, what will they find? “A baby wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger.” The superlative revolves around the diminutive. The One who is

wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger, on him hinges this great movement which brings salvation, God’s light, to the whole world. Enough for every nation. Enough for all peoples. Enough for all time. Enough for all times. Right into eternity, there is enough salvation tonight for all. But, it all hinges on the diminutive—a Child.

For such readings to become true for the whole world, and you and me, this Christmas, this Child must bring the greatest gift. He must give us a change of heart. And this Child alone brings that gift. With a change of heart we can have a new world. With a change of heart I can love you. It really takes something tremendous to change a human heart. To give a new heart, to give a new spirit, takes a tremendous grace.

And it all hinges around the diminutive: the little One, “wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger”. He alone has the key, “the key of David”; he is that key to your heart, to change it; to my heart, to give the new heart. He alone has that key. He will give it. He does give it. How does this change of heart come about?

In the Gospel we see three things happening that show how we get a change of heart. The first thing that reveals that change of heart is: They go! Everybody goes. To Bethlehem they go. Angels from heaven, they come; they go. Everyone goes to where it’s happening. Go! Go with what God gives. Go where he sends you. Go there. You don’t know why? You don’t know where, you don’t know how? That’s okay. Go. Just go.

The other thing I noticed in this Gospel is: Adore! Angels—specialists in adoration—appear for the occasion. Soon the shepherds will come. Later the Magi will come. This is a great theme of the Christmas season: Adore the Lord.

Do you realize that it is possible to be so busy about Christmas that one can forget to adore the Lord? That’s an amazing achievement! But it can happen, because adore has something to do with stop. Even if I’m on the go, in my heart I need to stop. We have to stop. Adore means: Stop! And bow down.

Isn’t it interesting that my heart, what it longs for, but what it will argue with the most, is that one word: adore. How hard it is to adore. What difficulties arise at the thought. What insurmountable obstacles seem to appear when the subject is raised—adore.

These are the days in which the grace is given—to adore the Lord. To stop. He knows what we have to do, but to stop somewhere and adore him—that changes the heart. The most hardened heart, the most grizzled, wizened, heart still will respond when one bows down and adores. It will go *Ahhh!* *Ohhh!* What was that? Just what I needed. Just what I’ve been resisting—for weeks, months, years. Adore.

So those are two words from the Gospel: *Go! Adore!*

And the third that comes is: *Give!* What you have, give. Mary and Joseph gave this Child what they could, that night: swaddling clothes, which were prepared ahead of time, and a manger (a feeding trough for animals) to rest in. That’s what they had; that’s what they gave. Wrap the Child in what you can give. Whatever you have to give, give that. It’s not too

poor, it's not too small for him. He's very small. Give what you have. Wrap him in it.

And when I wrap him in the swaddling clothes of my gift, of my love, and laying him in the manger of my poor heart—such as it is, this Christmas—I change. I receive a gift.

Please don't be fussy. This is not a fussy Baby. He likes what you give him. Is it a great gift, a beautiful creation? Give it to him. Is it so poor that you don't know what to do with it, you'd rather hide it? Give it to him. Is it your regret that you're not where you'd like to be now, in the spiritual journey? Give him that. Wrap him in your regret. Wrap him in your regret about your lack of regret! Whatever you've got, give him that. He'll give you a gift: a new heart; a new Spirit. (Christmas Mass 2007)

**CHRISTMAS SEASON PARISH CALENDAR**

**Monday, December 24<sup>th</sup>**

**Christmas Eve**

12:05 pm No Weekday Mass  
5 pm Christmas Family Mass with Children's Pageant  
9:30 pm Christmas Mass at Night

**Tuesday, December 25<sup>th</sup>**

**Christmas Day**

10 am Christmas Mass  
*(Please note that only one Mass will be celebrated on Christmas Day)*



**December 26<sup>th</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup>**

12:05 pm Weekday Mass

**Saturday, December 29<sup>th</sup>**

**Holy Family**

9 am Weekday Mass  
5 pm Vigil Mass

**Sunday, December 30<sup>th</sup>**

9 & 11 am Mass

**Monday, December 31<sup>st</sup>**

**Mary, the Holy Mother of God**

12:05 pm No Mass  
5 pm Vigil Mass



**Tuesday, January 1<sup>st</sup>**

10 am Mass



*(Please note that this solemnity is a Holy Day of Obligation for all Catholics, and only one Mass will be celebrated on New Year's Day)*



**Christmas greetings to all Parishioners!**

*Wishing you and your family a Joyous and Blessed Christmas!*

*Fr. Peter Tammearu,  
Fr. Giteendran, Alice, John  
& Susan*



**Mass Intentions**



**Monday December 24**

**Christmas Eve**

(No 12.05 pm Mass)

5 pm Family Mass with Children's Pageant

† Delfin Briones

*requested by the Briones & Patacsil families*

9:30 pm Mass During the Night

**Tuesday December 25**

**The Nativity of the Lord [Christmas Day]**

10 am For the People of the Parish

**Wednesday December 26**

**St Stephen, the First Martyr**

12:05 pm † Raymon Deranne

*requested by Carlton Paul*

**Thursday December 27**

**St John, Apostle & Evangelist**

12:05 pm † Don Bosco Monteiro

*requested by the Che family*

**Friday December 28**

**The Holy Innocents, Martyrs**

12:05 pm † Deceased members of Friends of Suffering

Souls & the Holy Souls in Purgatory

*requested by Allan Tanaka*

**Saturday December 29**

**Octave of the Nativity of the Lord**

9 am † Celestina & Jose Botelito

*requested by Jorgina Medeiros*

5 pm Vigil † Alfonso Florencia & Napoleon Villaroman

*requested by the Javier family*

**Sunday December 30**

**Holy Family of Jesus, Mary & Joseph**

9 am † Edwin Jordan

*requested by Mariam Jordan*

11 am † Vincent Sequeira

*requested by Brian & Alice Warford*

**music at the 11 am Mass**

**Opening:** #492 - O Come, O Come Emmanuel

**Offertory:** #972 - The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came

**Communion:** #1028 - You Satisfy the Hungry Heart

**Closing:** #500 - O Come Divine Messiah



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