November 20,2019

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

The season of Advent will begin on December 1. It’s a time of waiting with joyful anticipation. It’s a time to look forward to the great celebration of the birth of Christ and a time to do whatever we do with greater awareness that Christ is already with us. If you haven’t already begun some good Advent traditions in your home, now’s the time to start! *Buy an Advent wreath or construct a simple circle of evergreens and add four candles.* Light a new candle each week and pray together at mealtime or whenever works best. Also, attached to this letter you will find an Advent calendar. It’s our hope that you will use this calendar with your family throughout Advent (Dec. 1-25) to help you prepare for and celebrate the birth of Christ. This calendar also includes clickable links on saints if you access the online version here: <https://www.loyolapress.com/~/media/Images/Loyola%20Press/ocf-articles/advent/Advent-children-calendar.ashx?la=en> Another great Advent opportunity (though it will continue after Advent as well) are the **family friendly holy hours at Nativity**. The next two are **December 6 and 20 from 5:30-6:30 PM**. Pizza will be served afterward so you don’t even need to worry about dinner. Please let me know if you have any questions – we’d love to see you there!

A quick reminder that if you have a child who will be absent please call the R.E. office before 6:30 PM on Wednesdays to let us know.

Each year we have a special **R.E. Advent outreach project**. This year we will be focusing on Mary’s Inn. Mary's Inn is a maternity home dedicated to the physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being of single pregnant mothers and their developing babies. It is a safe haven where they can stay while learning the skills they need to make a better life for themselves and their babies. I've included a link to their site here in case you're interested in learning more <https://marysinnmaternityhome.org/>. Especially when we remember the story of Mary and Joseph traveling to Bethlehem and finding no room at any of the inns, I thought this would be an appropriate organization to aid. Let us welcome these women and their children into our hearts this Advent and in so doing welcome Christ and his mother into hearts as well. I will be distributing a list by the end of the week via email regarding their needs – any help you can give is very appreciated!

Lastly, I’m including links to two faith formation opportunities:

Dynamic Catholic’s “Best Advent Ever”: <https://dynamiccatholic.com/best-advent-ever> (St. Anthony’s Facebook page will also have daily discussions on the material from this program!)

Archdiocesan Women’s Conference: <https://archwomensconference.org/> (This is intended for women from high school on up.)

God bless,

Stephanie Klapatauskas Marcy McElroy

Coordinator of Religious Education Youth Formation Coordinator

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