

Newman University



2025 Advent Reflections

**Sunday, December 14 – Third Sunday of Advent Isaiah 35:1-6, 10; James 5:7-10;
Matthew 11:2-11**

I recall my high school band days when I was one of eighty musicians producing sounds to delight the ear and move the soul. But often that entailed times of waiting, of silence, while another section played its role in creating the overall effect the composer had envisioned. My section of the band would patiently count out bars of rest, waiting to contribute our part to the whole. Paying attention to what was happening during our silent waiting helped me understand how my part fit into the whole.

Waiting patiently has immense value in all aspects of life as James reminds us in the second reading. If we pay attention to what is happening during our times of “forced waiting” in the checkout line or at the stoplight in our daily commute we may be blessed with glimpses of the kingdom described in the reading from Isaiah and confirmed in Matthew’s gospel: the blind see, the lame walk, the poor have the good news proclaimed to them. We can become aware of how a smile to the harried mother in the checkout lane with her fussy child may be our way of giving her hope to “rejoice in the Lord always ... the Lord is near,” as the entrance antiphon instructs us.

Sister Betty Adams ASC '61, '66 Board of Trustee Member

Monday, December 15 – Numbers 24:2-7, 15-17; Matthew 21:23-27

In Numbers Balaam is speaking of how it pleases God for us to dwell with him and in him. Balaam also speaks of the coming of Jesus, a scepter out of Israel. In Matthew Jesus reminds the chief priests and elders that his authority is not subject to them; it comes from God. Together these verses tell of God’s great love and desire to be with us. Balaam prophetically declared the coming of Jesus, the Messiah, with all power and authority to save so that we could dwell with him forever. This is a time that we celebrate that gift in the form of a baby who brought hope to the world.

Kyrstin Gable, Executive Assistant, Institutional Advancement

Tuesday, December 16 – Zephaniah 3:1-2, 9-13; Matthew 21:28-32

Zephaniah warns the southern kingdom to return to God and follow the Law of Moses or face His judgment. His message reminds us to examine our hearts because when we believe, we are open to listen to the Holy Spirit. We often find that our actions don't match our words or God’s plan for us. Matthew illustrates this through the parable of the two sons: one who initially refused but later obeyed, and another who agreed but did nothing. Jesus says that even when people witnessed righteousness, like in John’s ministry, they refused to change. True faith is shown not in speech, but in genuine repentance and obedience.

Luis Piedra, Student

Wednesday, December 17 - Genesis 49:2, 8-10; Matthew 1:1-17

The Genesis passage points to the coming Savior, foreshadowing Jesus as the One “whom all nations will honor.” The passage from Matthew serves as a reminder to remain prayerfully ready and willing to share the love of God with all whom we encounter. It also highlights the lineage of Jesus, illustrating how God worked through imperfect and flawed individuals to bring forth the Messiah. This truth demonstrates that God can use anyone to advance His kingdom and accomplish His purposes.

Catherine Madison ‘24

Thursday, December 18 – Jeremiah 23:5-8; Matthew 1:18-25

Through Jeremiah, God promises his people both redemption and a king, and through Joseph's acceptance in Matthew, that promise is fulfilled in the coming of the Child Jesus at Christmas. God promises us all redemption through His reign, but just like Joseph, we must spend this Advent season in silence and obedience so that Christ might fulfil this promise and be born not only into the world, but into our hearts as well.

Elias Belton, Seminarian Student

Friday, December 19 – Judges 13:2-7, 24-25; Luke 1:5-25

Today's scriptures center birth announcements within Divine Providence. In Judges and Luke, angelic messages signal God is moving significantly—reversing barrenness and promising a “separated out” child. Reflecting on the passages, I couldn't help but notice that, while these miracles are divinely instituted, the Holy Spirit moves through human participation. Both mothers demonstrate physical and spiritual devotion to divine instructions, playing a vital role in the future deliverance of their people. Additionally, we shouldn't miss the distinction between these future “Wildmen” - while Samson delivers through physical strength - John calls hearts back to God, preparing the way for a different type of deliverer. Let us celebrate these announcements as we anticipate the next!

Andrew Giorgetti, Instructional Designer

Saturday, December 20 - Isaiah 7:10-14; Luke 1:26-38

In the passage from Isaiah, we have a wicked king, Ahaz, fearing Jerusalem's destruction, and convinced that God will not intervene. Despite Ahaz's failures, God sends Isaiah a hopeful message, for both the immediate situation and the future - the lineage of King David will survive to become the family of Immanuel – which means “God is with us.” 700-years later, in Luke, an unassuming teenager, Mary, is visited by the Angel Gabriel, and told she has God's favor to be the mother of Jesus – meaning “God saves.” Further, the Davidic reign will be eternal, cementing Isaiah's prophecy. Mary is confused, startled, but accepts. The significance of this is easily overlooked. 700-years have passed, yet God's faithfulness is unbreaking. The salvation of the world, God-with-us, in Jesus - all predicted and its fulfillment is why we celebrate this season.

Max Wheeler, IT Hardware and Software Specialist