



Vol. 7/No. 12 - December 2024

Kitty's Chronicle

Mercy Associates Newsletter

Prayers for the Sick

Let us pray for the sick, especially our Associates, Sisters of Mercy, family members, friends and caregivers. May God touch them with comfort, healing and strength.



We pray for people who are on our list this week – Jaxon McKinney (grandnephew of Sister Maureen O'Keefe), Diane Hickey (sister-in-law of Cathy Hickey), Theresa Lacey (sister of Annie Brown), Marilyn Thurston, Patricia King, Sylvia Flood, Kevin Drover (husband of Geraldine Drover), Marion Bonia (sister of Anne Marie Davis), Sister Theresa Boland, George Bradbury (husband of Barbara Bradbury), Rick Mahon (son of Doreen Stone), Margaret MacNeil (sister of Geraldine Drover) and Jim Wakeford (nephew of Sister Maureen O'Keefe).

(If you wish to have your name or another person's name added to or removed from this list please let Sharon Drover know (drover.sharon@yahoo.ca.)



Prayer for the Sick

Through the Intercession of Catherine McAuley

God of Love and Mercy,
You inspired Catherine McAuley,
To serve your Son by responding

To the needs of her time.

Moved by her care for the Sick,
We ask that through Her Prayers
You reach out with Your Healing Love
And restore them to full health

We ask this in complete
Confidence through Jesus Christ, Your Son
Amen.

Catherine McAuley, Pray For Us
Amen.



Light a Candle



Let us continue, in solidarity with Mercy Sisters,
Associates and Colleagues around the world, to light a
candle and pray for justice and peace.





From the Wisdom Circles

Circle of Compassion

"The joy of brightening other lives, bearing each other's burdens, easing other's loads and supplanting empty hearts and lives with generous gifts becomes for us the magic of the holidays."

— *W.C. Jones*

Contemplative Presence

Take Time to be Aware

"Take time to be aware that in the very midst of our busy preparations for the celebration of Christ's birth in ancient Bethlehem, Christ is reborn in the Bethlehems of our homes and daily lives. Take time, slow down, be still, be awake to the Divine Mystery that looks so common and so ordinary yet is wondrously present.

"An old abbot was fond of saying, 'The devil is always the most active on the highest feast days.'



“The supreme trick of Old Scratch is to have us so busy decorating, preparing food, practicing music and cleaning in preparation for the feast of Christmas that we actually miss the coming of Christ. Hurt feelings, anger, impatience, injured egos – the list of clouds that busyness creates to blind us to the birth can be long, but it is familiar to us all.”

- Edward Hays, *A Pilgrim's Almanac*, p. 196



Integrity of Creation

“Just now one of the significant historical roles of the primal people of the world is not simply to sustain their own traditions, but call the entire civilized world back to a more authentic mode of being.”

- Thomas Berry



Diversity and Inclusion

. “Unity, not uniformity, must be our aim. We attain unity only through variety.
Differences must be integrated, not annihilated, not absorbed.”

– Mary Parker Follett, social worker

Notes from the Associates/Sisters

ITEMS OF INTEREST



is the twelfth and final month of the year in the Julian and Gregorian calendars. Its length is 31 days.

December's name derives from the Latin word *decem* (meaning ten) because it was originally the tenth month of the year in the calendar of Romulus c. 750 BC, which began in March. The winter days following December were not included as part of any month. Later, the months of January and February were created out of the monthless period and added to the beginning of the calendar, but December retained its name.

In Ancient Rome, as one of the four Agonalia, this day in honour of Sol Indiges was held on December 11, as was Septimontium. Dies natalis (birthday) was held at the temple of Tellus on December 13, Consualia was held on December 15, Saturnalia was held December 17-23, Opiconsivia



was held on December 19, Divalia was held on December 21, Larentalia was held on December 23, and the dies natalis of Sol Invictus was held on December 25. These dates do not correspond to the modern Gregorian calendar.

The Anglo-Saxons referred to December–January as Ġēolamonað (modern English: "Yule month"). The French Republican Calendar contained December within the months of Frimaire and Nivôse.

December contains the winter solstice in the Northern Hemisphere, the day with the fewest daylight hours, and the summer solstice in the Southern Hemisphere, the day with the most daylight hours (excluding polar regions in both cases, which consistently have none or 24 hours, respectively, near the solstice). December in the Northern Hemisphere is the seasonal equivalent to June in the Southern Hemisphere and vice versa. In the Northern hemisphere, the beginning of the astronomical winter is traditionally 21 December or the date of the solstice.

The zodiac signs for the month of December are Sagittarius (until December 21) and Capricorn (December 22 onward).

December's birth flower is the narcissus. Its birthstones are turquoise, zircon and tanzanite.





Journey of the Magi
Waiting and Watching

Monday, Dec. 16th 10:00 am –
1:00pm Facilitated by: Anne Walsh,
Catherine Penney-Ryan and Sr.
Eileen Penney
Sisters of Mercy - Recreation Hall
To Register contact: Barbara Hawley-
marthagrad67@gmail.com

Please feel free to bring along a friend! Everyone welcome!



We strongly encourage you to go to our mercy website:
www.sistersofmercyfnf.org and have a look at the ASSOCIATE section.
There are many new additions, lots of photos and some videos. new
additions, lots of photos and some videos.

We hope that you will enjoy and be encouraged to keep working for the
growth of our Mercy Associate relationship.





St. Lucy – December 13th

Lucy died at Syracuse in Sicily, probably in the persecution of the emperor Diocletian in 304. Widely venerated from the earliest times, her memorial has long been kept on this day. Probably because her name is suggestive of light, her intercession has been sought for eyesight problems.

Legend has it that St. Lucy delivered wheat and bread to the poor and homebound, and possibly to Christians staying in the catacombs, often in the darkness of night to avoid detection. She would carry a lamp or wear a crown of candles (to free her hands for carrying food) to light her way. She was radiant with Christian faith and courage.





The Archival Moment

The Archival Moment is contributed by Sister Charlotte Fitzpatrick.

Sister M. Camillus Cole

Susanna Cole, born in Colliers, Conception Bay, Newfoundland entered the Sisters of Mercy on Military Road, St. John's in March of 1857. She was received into the novitiate and given the name Sister M. Camillus Joseph on the feast of Our Lady of Mercy in the same year. Her novitiate companions were Sister M. Ligouri Carmody and Sister M. Ignatius Guinane, two young women from Limerick, Ireland, along with another Newfoundlander, Sister M. Clare Tarrahan, who had entered the community a year earlier.

In 1857, with four professed sisters and four novices, the future of the fledgling Mercy Convent in Newfoundland looked very promising, and plans for expanding the mission were on the move. In 1859 the sisters opened St. Michael's Convent and Orphanage at Belvedere and in 1861 used the space made possible by the move to open St. Clair's Boarding School at Mercy Convent.

Sadly, the newly professed Sister M. Camillus died on April 13, 1860 at the young age of twenty-one years. Her dowry was used to erect headstones for her and Sister M. Francis Creedon in Belvedere cemetery. A section of the Belvedere estate had been consecrated in 1848 by Bishop Thomas Mullock, then coadjutor bishop of St. John's, as a Roman Catholic cemetery, replacing the old Catholic cemetery on Long's Hill.



Reflection December 2024

A Mysterious Christmas Gift

I looked at the gift. It looked SO different than the others under the tree. It was so carefully wrapped and even had a ribbon tied in a bow. In rich red paper it was beautiful! THIS gift was larger than the others too. Something was missing... It didn't have a name on it. I couldn't ask whose it was; it seemed too special. I just looked in wonder. Just having it under the tree added something special to Christmas.



That Christmas, along with other holidays, was not special. Holidays, in my home, were filled with lots of drinking.

Drinking always led to yelling. . .

Yelling led to fights. . .

Fights sometimes went beyond words . . .

In our home the “special” had been lost in holiday events. This Christmas in particular was framed in angry discussions of job loss and financial stress. I overheard a lot.

The GIFT was so mysterious; it was a blaze of red color in my black and white world. It captured my mind.

I could hardly contain myself as the time came to open presents! I am the youngest of four. Presents were handed out in order, oldest to youngest. Each time another gift was handed out the anticipation built.

It did not go to my sister. . .

My oldest brother did not get it. . .

My middle brother was given the box next to it. . .

Next, my mom's hand reached for THE gift . . . **my world went into slow motion** when she handed THE mysterious, beautifully wrapped gift to me! For just a moment I didn't move. Maybe it was a mistake... then I saw the



hidden tag; it said, “**To Mike from Santa.**” It was real. It was for me. My fingers began to un-wrap the box; I was still in disbelief. As the paper fell away, I could hardly believe my eyes; a brand new pair of black ice skates. New for ME! Being the youngest boy with two older brothers almost nothing was new coming to me. Now right in front of me were brand new shiny ice skates.

I remember nothing else of that day beyond skating up and down the ice covered country roads. I was the only one thankful for the recent ice storm! In the next few days, I’m sure I must have broken some world record for the distance skated by a 9 year old boy.

That gift lifted me out of a fog. I’m not sure what I would label the fog. Maybe it was the expectation that somehow Christmas should be special. Maybe it was TV or maybe comments I heard at school but somehow I thought Christmas should be a special time. The mysterious gift made that Christmas the most memorable of my childhood. I never found out who “Santa” was. I wish I could say, “Thank you” and let them know how much that gift meant. Someone’s kindness made a significant impact and a memorable Christmas.

I now know there is another mysterious gift that makes Christmas special. Often it is missed in the busyness, emotion or misplaced focus of the season. This gift has removed the fog of despair that had a grip on my life. This mysterious gift came in the form of a baby born in a stable. When I consider that Jesus left the perfection of heaven, it is almost incomprehensible. He came to walk the planet He created. Each day, His heart was broken by the people he came to serve. He did this for nine year old boys. All this is wonderful, mysterious and beautiful. What a gift. Since I do know THIS gift giver, I can say “Thank you” for a life changing gift.

Have you considered Jesus, the One whose heart has been broken and He knows all your hurts and sorrows. Would you like to know Him personally? You can by simply opening up your life to Him and asking Him to come into your life, forgive you sins and be direct your life from this moment on. You can pray a prayer something like this:



Lord Jesus, I want to know You personally. Thank You for dying on the cross for my sins. I open the door of my life to You and ask You to come in as my Saviour and Lord. Take control of my life. Thank You for forgiving my sins and giving me eternal life. Bring peace to my world this Christmas. Make me the kind of person You want me to be.

If you invited Christ into your life, thank God often that He is in your life, that He will never leave you and that you have eternal life. As you learn more about your relationship with God, and how much He loves you, you'll experience life to the fullest...

- Mike Woodard



Poetry Pause

The Dipper

It was winter, near freezing,
I'd walked through a forest of firs
when I saw issue out of the waterfall
a solitary bird.

It lit on a damp rock,
and, as water swept stupidly on,
wrung from its own throat
supple, undammable song.



It isn't mine to give.
I can't coax this bird to my hand
that knows the depth of the river
yet sings of it on land.

~ Kathleen Jamie



*From
Kitty's Kitchen*

Some fun ideas for your Christmas table



Cheese and tomato platter shaped into a tree or a candycane





Pretzel stick; pita bread cut in triangles; cheese spread and red peppers

Strawberries; cool whip and raisins for the eyes



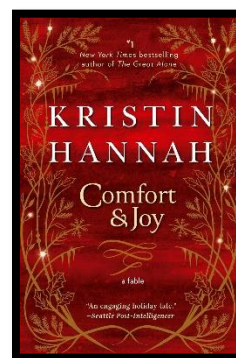


From Kitty's Library

A Good Read...

Comfort & Joy by Kristin Hannah *a Fable*

Joy Candellaro once loved Christmas more than any other time of the year. Now, as the holiday approaches, recently divorced and alone, she can't summon the old enthusiasm for celebrating. So without telling anyone, she buys a ticket and boards a plane bound for the beautiful Pacific Northwest. When an unexpected detour takes her deep into the woods of the Olympic rainforest, Joy makes a bold decision to leave her ordinary life behind—to just walk away—and thus begins an adventure unlike any she could have imagined.



In the small town of Rain Valley, six-year-old Bobby O'Shea is facing his first Christmas without a mother. Unable to handle the loss, Bobby has closed himself off from the world, talking only to his invisible best friend. His father Daniel is beside himself, desperate to help his son cope.

When Bobby meets Joy, on a magical Christmas Eve, a night of impossible dreams, unexpected life changes take place.



Pause for Thought ...

TODAY

My life is a gift of God,
Given, not in years,
But a day at a time.
Today is the day God has made
For me,
And God planned it to be the most
Important day of my life.
Yesterday is gone, never to return.
I must not worry about it, but
Leave it in the hands of God.
Tomorrow and all that it holds is
God's secret and its coming is not assured.
Only today is mine.
Each day, arranged by God with infinite
Wisdom and goodness is God's gift,
God's act of love for me.
In thanksgiving I will offer God
Every day the gift of myself –
My prayers, works, joys and sufferings.
Dear God, receive them graciously.



ADVENT 2024

The Advent 2024 themes traditionally focus on the virtues and qualities central to the preparation for Christmas. Each year, the Advent themes are always the same. The four primary themes are:

1. **Hope** – Reflecting on the hope of Christ’s coming, past and future, and God’s promises of redemption.
2. **Peace** – Embracing the peace that Christ brings into the world and seeking peace within our hearts and relationships.
3. **Joy** – Rejoicing in the anticipation of Jesus' arrival, especially celebrated on the third Sunday (Gaudete Sunday).
4. **Love** – Remembering God’s love for humanity in sending his Son and reflecting that love to others.

Advent 2024 First Theme: Hope

The Advent theme of **hope** is the first focus of the season, setting the tone for a period of anticipation and expectation. This is Advent's first Sunday theme. Rooted in the promises of God, hope during Advent looks forward to both the celebration of Christ’s birth and his eventual return.

What is the importance of hope during Advent?

Biblically, hope is a steadfast trust in God’s faithfulness, seen in verses like **Jeremiah 29:11**—“*For I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, give you a future and a hope.*” This hope encourages believers to trust in God’s plan, even in uncertain times, just as God’s people awaited a Savior in times of hardship.

In Advent, hope reminds us that God is with us and has promised a future filled with his presence and peace. Lighting the first Advent candle of hope serves as a reminder of the light that Jesus brings to a world in darkness. Embracing the theme of hope calls us to pray, reflect, and align our hearts with God’s promises, looking forward to the joy of Christ’s arrival at Christmas and his return at the end of time.



Advent 2024 Second Theme: Peace

The Advent theme of **peace** centers on the tranquility and wholeness that Jesus brings to the world. Celebrated during the second week of Advent, peace reminds us that Christ's coming is meant to reconcile humanity with God and with one another. In Scripture, peace is more than just the absence of conflict—it's a deep, lasting harmony rooted in God's presence.

What is the importance of peace during Advent?

Isaiah 9:6 foretells Jesus as the “Prince of Peace,” whose kingdom will bring justice and peace to all who follow him. This is a common [Scripture verse to read during Advent](#).

As we light the second Advent candle, we reflect on the ways Jesus calls us to be peacemakers in our lives, showing kindness, understanding, and forgiveness to others. Advent peace encourages us to let go of our anxieties, trusting in God's love and guidance.

Advent 2024 Third Theme: Joy

The Advent theme of **joy** is celebrated during the third week, known as *Gaudete* Sunday, a Latin term meaning “rejoice.” Joy is central to Advent, as it reflects the excitement and gratitude for the coming of Jesus, who brings salvation to the world. This joy isn't merely happiness—it's a profound, resilient gladness rooted in God's love and promises.

What is the importance of joy during Advent?

In **Luke 2:10**, the angel announces Jesus' birth to the shepherds, saying, “*I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.*” This message captures the joy of Advent: God's promise fulfilled in the birth of Christ.

Lighting the pink candle for joy symbolizes a break from the season's penitential tone, inviting us to celebrate the blessings of Christ's coming. Advent joy calls us to pause and appreciate the presence of God in our lives, looking forward to the fullness of joy that Christmas brings. It's an



invitation to reflect this joy through kindness, gratitude, and worship, radiating the light of Christ to those around us.

Advent 2024 Fourth Theme: Love

The Advent theme of **love** is celebrated during the fourth and final week of Advent, highlighting God’s deep and boundless love for humanity. Love is at the heart of the Christmas story: God sent his only Son, Jesus, as an act of selfless love to redeem the world.

What is the importance of love during Advent?

This theme reminds us of **John 3:16**—“*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son.*” It’s a powerful message that the birth of Christ is the ultimate expression of God’s love, freely given to all.

As we light the fourth Advent candle, symbolizing love, we reflect on how Jesus calls us to love one another as he has loved us. This season encourages us to embody God’s love through acts of kindness, compassion, and forgiveness, extending that love to family, friends, and those in need. Advent love invites us to open our hearts to receive God’s love anew and share it generously, preparing to welcome Christ with a heart full of gratitude and grace.

What Is the Purpose of the Themes of Advent 2024?

The four themes of Advent—hope, peace, joy, and love—guide us through a season of meaningful reflection and spiritual preparation. As each week unfolds, these themes encourage us to align our hearts with the message of Christ’s birth, deepening our understanding of his presence in our lives. [As we pray throughout Advent](#), we’re called to reflect and embody these themes. Embracing these themes allows us to celebrate Advent in a way that’s both personal and communal, preparing us to experience the full beauty and mystery of Christmas. By reflecting on God’s promises, seeking his peace, rejoicing in his presence, and sharing his love, we enter Christmas with hearts ready to receive the gift of Jesus anew.





Advent 2024 provided by *Ascension*



The Last Word...

“My legacy to the Institute is charity: If you preserve the peace and union which have never yet been violated among us, you will feel, even in this world, a happiness that will surprise you and be to you a foretaste of the bliss prepared for every one of you in heaven.”

- Quoted in Carroll, *The Life of Catherine McAuley*, p. 435





Christmas Prayer

“The things of God can wait, we think and we say. And yet he is the most important thing, ultimately the one truly important thing. Why should we not also be moved by curiosity to see more closely and to know what God has said to us? At this hour, let us ask him to touch our hearts with the holy curiosity and the holy joy of the shepherds, and thus let us go over joyfully to Bethlehem, to the Lord who today once more comes to meet us. Amen.”

- Pope Benedict XVI, Christmas 2012





Adobe Stock

***Catherine and I hope you all have
a happy and blessed Christmas!***

