

THE MAGI

Matthew 2:1-6

They came from different countries and probably different faiths.
From Arabia, Persia, India... they met along the journey.
It was their message that was important
...Christ is the King of the world!

Mother Teresa said:

"There is only one God and he is the God of all, therefore it is important that everyone is seen equal before God. I've always said we should help a Hindu become a better Hindu, a Muslim a better Muslim, a catholic a better catholic. We believe our work should be our example to people."

~ ***How is your work, your life, an example of this to those around you?***

Some of Mary MacKillop's best friends were people of other faiths.
This Christmas share your faith without using words.

ANGELS

Luke 2: 8-14

When you hear the word angel, what do you think of?

Images are given of them in the Old Testament and New Testament.
St Francis said we should focus on the message not the messenger.
The Angels announced the biggest change of all
– God is in our corner, on our side, one of us.

~ ***What does this message mean for you?***

This Christmas, let the angels remind you of the great change that Christ makes in your life, and let that change, shine through in everything you do.

THE STAR

Matthew 2: 9-11

This was the light of Christmas.....

it drew people to the true light – JESUS.

~ ***This Christmas....what lights up your life?***

The people we love are the lights of our life and we need to remember to remind them of that. And we also need to allow the true light of Jesus to shine out of us for all to see not just at Christmas but all year.

Christmas Blessings to All!!

(Prayer sheet was inspired by: "Franciscan Christmas" by Kathleen M Carroll.)

Is Advent a time of waiting or an item on your to do list?

Before Advent had even started the commercial world was telling us about Christmas - ideas for presents, for the food to be served etc etc. The pressure is upon us to get organized, the functions are starting and we fall head-on into it all in a rush without even realizing that
Advent is here!



**In the midst of my confusion
In the time of desperate need
When I am thinking not too clearly
A gentle voice does intercede**

**Slow down, slow down, be still
Be still and wait, on the Spirit of the Lord
Slow down and hear His voice
And know that He is God**

**In the time of tribulation
When I'm feeling so unsure
When things are pressing in about me
Comes a gentle voice so still, so pure**

**Slow down, slow down, be still
Be still and wait, on the Spirit of the Lord
Slow down and hear His voice
And know that He is God
And know that He is God**

"Slow Down" song by Chuck

Girard

“Believe in the whisperings of God to your own heart.”

(Mary MacKillop 1868)

*“Though many of us will be apart,
We can be united in spirit and pray for each other at
the Crib and at the Altar.”*

(Mary MacKillop, 7 Dec 1899)



History credits St Francis of Assisi with the beginning of the tradition of the Christmas crèche in the town of Greccio, 1223

Let's take some time to reflect a little on those within Nativity scene.

JESUS

John 1:1-5

Whilst Jesus is the reason for the season it can still be a testing time. For some it may be the first Christmas in a new home, with a new baby, new partner.... For some they may be living the season for the first time without... a partner, child, parent, pet! The year may have had some tough times which make this Christmas different.

Christmas in Bethlehem... Jesus gave only one gift in the gospels ...himself. So the best gift we can give anyone is the gift of your time – precious because we only have so much of it.

~ *Who needs more of your time?* – spouse, child, a friend....

MARY

Luke 1:30-34, 38

Images of Mary show her as the perfect role model of mother. But that only came because she was willing to be dependent on God.

What we learn from Mary is that who we are depends on God's opinion, not anyone else's.

We cannot choose how society defines us, but we can choose which voice to listen to.

~ *Do the children in our lives know that their worth is unrelated to what is under the tree on Christmas morning?*

~ *Do we ourselves know the same thing?*

Let us remember it is who we are that matters far more than what we do.

JOSEPH

Matthew 1:18-20, 24

He had two honourable choices about dealing with the pregnancy

-Denounce Mary and have her stoned

-Dissolve their betrothal and leave her to whatever consequences might befall her. OR marry her anyway - Not the honourable choice for a man of his time. But his heart was open to God even though he may have struggled at first.

We must find a way to be the men and women God created us to be and to encourage and respect the same struggle in everyone around us.

This Christmas celebrate the uniqueness of each person in your life and do so in your own unique way.

~*How might you do that?*

SHEPHERDS

Luke 2:15-18, 20.

The Shepherds were poor, on the fringe. Just like the people that Mary MacKillop saw a need to serve. Those she made to feel special.

Despite their position the Shepherds had an important job...

Hear the news

Repeat the news to others

Go back to the fields/flock, and praise God

~ *Is this our role / our place?*

This Christmas remember those on the margins – the friend or relative you've lost touch with, the sick, poor, and lonely.
Do what you can to help someone to remember how special they are.