



VOCATION SPIRIT NEWS

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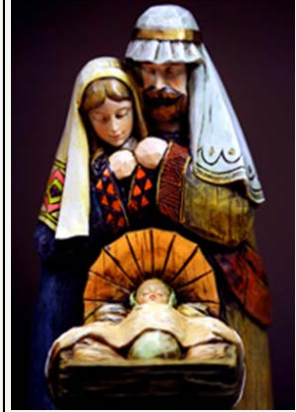
VOLUME 1, ISSUE 25

PRIESTS
FOR
YEAR

"A Simple Contemplation" from America Magazine

This is an advent reflection from the editors of America Magazine about the Nativity.

In 1223, in the Italian village of Greccio, St. Francis of Assisi constructed the first crèche (from the French word for "cradle" or "crib"), to encourage Christians to enter imaginatively into the scene of the Nativity. After filling a manger with hay and tying an ox and an ass nearby, St. Francis attended Mass before the crib along with villagers. Three centuries later St. Ignatius Loyola invited believers who were making the Spiritual Exercises to imagine Mary and Joseph as they made their way to Bethlehem. "See in imagination the road from Nazareth to Bethlehem," wrote Ignatius. "Consider its length and breadth, whether it is level or winds through valleys and hills. Similarly, look at the place or cave of the Nativity: How big is it, or small? How low or high? And how is it furnished?"



From americamagazine.org

The Nativity is among the most familiar of images for Christians: The beautiful young virgin cradles her newborn child in her arms as her doting husband (not to mention the placid animals and astonished shepherds) look on lovingly. But it is also an image that can grow stale as a person grows older, so it is easy to overlook the scene as a possible source of fresh and even surprising spiritual insights. It is also easy to forget that while the person at the center of the

story was fully divine, each member of the Holy Family—including Jesus—was fully human. In these difficult times, what might the experiences of these three individuals, as they make their way through the days surrounding the Nativity, say to us in our world—particularly to those who are unemployed, ill or in any way struggling?

Jesus. First of all, an infant is entirely dependent on others for every physical need, starting with nourishment. In these difficult times, many adults begin to feel they are becoming more and more dependent on others, perhaps even for nourishment. Can we see that dependence as something holy, rather than as something to be rejected? An infant is also trusting, looking to the parent to do the right thing. Can this be our stance toward God? A child is vulnerable to a host of things—illness, pain, frustration.

Continued next week...

So, How DO I Know?



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Discover Your Path ~ Annual Catholic Men's Retreat

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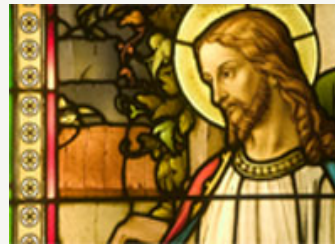
JANUARY 8TH-10TH, 2010

Sponsored by the Diocesan Vocation Directors of Wisconsin, this annual retreat provides spiritual guidance as well as great one on one interaction with Priests & Seminarians as well as those discerning the Priesthood.

Opening mass for this retreat will be celebrated by Archbishop Jerome Listekci.

This Retreat is for all Catholic men who want to grow in their call to holiness as well as for those considering the Call to Priesthood.

[CLICK HERE TO FIND OUT ABOUT THIS RETREAT ON THINKPRIEST.ORG](http://thinkpriest.org)



St. Francis De Sales Seminary
Retreat Center
3257 South Lake Drive
St. Francis, Wisconsin
For More Info, contact Father Jim Lobacz, Vocations Director at: vocations@sfs.edu or call the Vocations Office: 414-747-6437

VOCATIONAL AND YOUNG ADULT QUICK LINKS:

thinkpriest.org

[HOW DO I KNOW?](#)

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An Advent Meditation from Vocation.com

And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages." As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, "I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire." So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people.

Introductory Prayer: Lord, I believe that you became true man, and this season of Advent is my opportunity to prepare my soul for your spiritual coming at Christmas. I hope in your grace that this time it will not be just a routine remembrance of your coming, but a Christmas that changes me and transforms me to be the person you wish me to be. I love you Lord, for coming on this earth as a man, for becoming one like me. I love you, Lord, for showing me what true love is, the giving of your very self.

Petition: Grant me the grace to change what keeps me from being the person you want me to be. **1. The crowds asked him.** Faced with John's preaching, people realized that the Kingdom of God was at hand. Some-

thing stirred in their souls, they knew that they were missing something, so they did what is natural and necessary in the spiritual life: they asked. But they didn't ask just anyone, they asked the authentic prophet, the man who was obviously living his own call in utter sincerity and coherence. They were not living as they ought, and they wanted to do right according to God. The people trusted John and sought answers from him, for his life and his words rang with truth.



With John the Baptist, the Holy Spirit begins the restoration to man of "the divine likeness," prefiguring what he would achieve with and in Christ. John's baptism was for repentance; baptism in water and the Spirit will be a new birth, (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 720). The Holy Spirit was at work in the souls who came to him, inspiring them to seek him out. They asked him because they saw in him a Prophet, he would show them the way. They recognized in him the person they should be. They saw in him hope and a way. They did not know what to do, so they asked him: What then should we do?

[CLICK HERE TO CHECK OUT VOCATION.COM](http://VOCATION.COM)



From <http://oldsterview.files>

Milwaukee has two new Transitional Deacons

Congratulations to our newest deacons, Antony Primal Thomas and Erich Weiss! [Click here](#) to check out a video of the ordination ceremony on thinkpriest.org.

Add a new facebook friend

Think Priest is on facebook! Click on the picture to your right to be taken to the thinkpriest page...and don't forget to make thinkpriest your facebook friend.



Picture from Vocation.com

Greetings friends! A few weeks ago, I plunged into lake Michigan in 30 degree weather to support [Invisible Conflicts](#), an organization that works in Uganda helping to provide children with education. BURR it was cold! ~ peace, bob spoerl.



ME

[CLICK HERE TO CHECK OUT Vocation Forum](#), a place where you can explore vocations to religious life. This forum is for those who wonder if religious life is for them and for those who are actively discerning religious life. (This is run by Sister Julie, IHM religious).

Take some time to explore the forum. If you are a guest, you are most welcome. However you will only be able to see the "About Vocation Forum" posts and not the rest of the site. Registration is free and easy to do.

A Nun's Life -- <http://ANunsLife.org>.



In seed time learn, in harvest teach, in winter enjoy. ~William Blake
[... so we sing, let it snow, let it snow, let it snow!]