



Catholic Charities Affiliates

Of the Diocese of LaCrosse
Good Samaritan News Letter

December 2009

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Nativity Prayer

Let Your goodness Lord appear to us, that we made in your image, conform ourselves to it.
In our own strength we cannot imitate Your majesty, power, and wonder nor is it fitting for us to try.
But Your mercy reaches from the heavens through the clouds to the earth below.
You have come to us as a small child, but you have brought us the greatest of all gifts, the gift of eternal love
Caress us with Your tiny hands, embrace us with Your tiny arms and pierce our hearts with Your soft, sweet cries.

St. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153)

Reflection



We are called to be witnesses of God's by the love we extend to others, precursors of his justice by our commitment to what is right and good; lamps reflecting the light of God's Christ in our forgiveness, mercy and compassion; caretakers of souls through our humble and dedicated servanthood.

Waiting in Advent

Let us continue to reflect, that during the Advent season we symbolically participate in the waiting of the patriarchs, kings, prophets, and priests, as we await Christ's final and glorious return. Through prayer, liturgy, Eucharist, and the signs and symbols of Advent, we groan with Isaiah for a day when weapons will be turned into agricultural instruments. We cry out with Zechariah, rejoicing that the dawn from on high is breaking upon us. We pray with the likes of Adam, Job, Hannah, Solomon, Micah, and millions of others, named and unnamed, many whose expectations of the future kingdom may have been hazy, yet who still yearned for something more complete and more "real" than what they knew.

We cry out *Maranatha*, Come Lord! with St. Paul. When God the Word became man in Christ, celebrated on Christmas day, the world was sanctified. Something in the fabric of the cosmos shifted as creation became a fitting vehicle for God's redemptive work. Human experiences have been sanctified as well, commemorated in our Church Year. Yes, as the season of Advent shows, even waiting has become sanctified.

As we wait in long lines this Advent season, or as we wait for anything really, it is important that we remember the waiting of those expecting the Messiah, and always wait with patience, humility, and expectant hope in a state of prayer. It is difficult, but especially during Advent to wait prayerfully and patiently, in the manner of our Lord and his blessed Mother.

This habit of attentive waiting, is not only a good spiritual discipline, but could also lower our risk of holiday-induced high blood pressure. We're all waiting for something, so why not use these experiences to enhance our Advent disciplines by prayerfully waiting, joining our prayers with Isaiah, Zechariah, and all the saints?

Catholic Charities News

Catholic Charities in the Community

The Immigration Program was featured in the Winter 2009 issue of *Charities USA- The Magazine of Catholic Charities USA* regarding the recent Mexican Consulate event at the Holy Cross Diocesan Center in La Crosse. A portion of the caption stated:

“Over four days, 500 documents were issued. However, the number of Hispanic individuals who came to Catholic Charities was much higher. It turned out to be a wonderful outreach event to the local Hispanic population.”

Grants and Fundraising

Congratulations to the Financial Counseling Program on a grant award from the National Foreclosure Mitigation Counseling Program.

Congratulations to the Immigration Program on a grant from the Catholic Campaign for Human Development. Thank you to the Office of Ministries and Social Concerns for their continued support of Catholic Charities programs.

Congratulations to the Emergency Services Program on grants from the La Crosse Community Foundation and the W. O'Neil Foundation. Special thanks to the Foundation staff and board for their continued support of Catholic Charities.

Catholic Charities Office Locations:

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