

# ON OUR KNEES IN HIS HANDS



*Merry Christmas*



# ON OUR KNEES IN HIS HANDS

DECEMBER  
2022

“The Magi are filled with awe by  
what they see;  
heaven on earth and earth in heaven;  
man in God and God in man;  
they see enclosed in a tiny body  
the One whom the entire world  
cannot contain.”

St. Peter Chrysologus

### **Published by:**

*The Life in the Spirit Communities of the Catholic  
Charismatic Renewal, Colombo, Sri Lanka,  
(With Ecclesiastical Approval).*

### **Editors**

Lalith Perera  
Louis Benedict  
Mario Dabera

Read the “Daily Reflections” from anywhere in the world  
by downloading the PDF file from  
[www.risenlordcommunity.org](http://www.risenlordcommunity.org)

## Season of Advent

“Be vigilant.” Let us focus on this important aspect of the Christian life. From the words of Christ, we see that vigilance is tied to alertness: be alert, do not get distracted, that is, stay awake! Vigilance means this: not to allow our hearts to become lazy or our spiritual life to soften into mediocrity. Be careful because we can become “sleepy Christians”...who are anesthetized by spiritual worldliness - Christians without spiritual fervor, without intensity in prayer, without enthusiasm for mission, without passion for the Gospel. “Be vigilant at all times and pray” (Lk 21:36). Prayer is what keeps the lamp of the heart lit. This is especially true when we feel that our enthusiasm has cooled down. Prayer re-lights it, because it brings us back to God, to the center of things. Prayer reawakens the soul from sleep and focuses it on what matters, on the purpose of existence. Even during our busiest days, we must not neglect prayer. We could make a habit of saying, “Come, Lord Jesus.” This time of preparation leading to Christmas is beautiful: we think of the nativity scene and Christmas, so let us say from the heart: “Come, Lord Jesus”.

(From the Angelus Message of Pope Francis, 28 November 2021)

Maranatha! Come Lord Jesus!

## Thursday December 1

First Week of Advent

Isaiah  
26:1-6

Psalm 118:  
1,8-9,19-21,25-27

Matthew  
7:21,24-27

Sacrificing our life for the sake of others.

Without works our faith in God is incomplete. We are called to come out of our selfishness, and think about others. The more we seek prosperity, the more self-centered we tend to be. We are called to imitate the life of Christ, who gave up the comforts of this world. Worshiping God involves giving up pleasures and self-indulgence and standing up to do the works of God. We are called to sacrifice our own lives; our time and talents for the sake of others. This is how we build our foundation on a rock that cannot be shaken. We do not need to act on his word by our own strength, God does not expect us to do that. God only wants our sincere response, our free will, to spend time in prayer, to earnestly seek his will in our life and to build an intimate relationship with him. The closer we get to Jesus, it becomes easier to do God's work. It is no longer we, but Christ who lives inside us, it is the power of the Holy Spirit that will give us the grace and courage to do God's work until the end of our lives.

Prayer: Abba Father, strengthen me to do your will.  
Amen.

## Friday December 2

First Week of Advent

Isaiah  
29:17-24

Psalm  
27:1,4,13-14

Matthew  
9:27-31

Transformation in Christ.

In the first reading, the Messianic promise comforts us. We could understand the favour of God upon His people when we go through the first reading. We have hope in the Lord and none of us would be left out. We have to claim our identity as children of God and live in the comfort of God our Father. Whoever would call upon the name of the Lord Jesus will be saved. Our dryness, weakness and infirmities are transformed in the name of our Lord Jesus. When we are lost and broken we are like infertile land. We would only produce negativity to the society. The good news is; when we call upon the name of the Lord Jesus we become transformed people who would live a new life. We would hear God's voice, see His marvellous deeds and we would bear His fruits. This is what happened in the Gospel proclamation. The two blind men who had only heard about the Lord Jesus called out and were healed. The promise of the first reading was fulfilled in the Gospel proclamation.

Prayer: Abba Father, I am your child. I am redeemed by the blood of Jesus and filled with the Holy Spirit. Amen.

## Saturday December 3

Solemnity of Saint Francis Xavier, Priest

Jeremiah  
1:4-9

Psalm  
117:1,4-9

1 Corinthians  
9:16-19,22-23

Mark  
16:15-20

Actions speak louder than words.

Today we celebrate the Solemnity of Saint Francis Xavier, patron saint of Mission lands. In the first reading, we see how God called Jeremiah saying, "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you...and appointed you a prophet to the nations." In the Gospel proclamation we see the Lord sending out his disciples to proclaim the Good News to all of creation. It is this same calling that we are asked to respond to. St Francis Xavier responded by leaving the comforts of Europe to toil in Asia, spreading the Good News of Jesus in often hostile territories. Let us ask the Holy Spirit to renew our missionary zeal. In today's context missionary work often entails bearing witness to the Gospel in the way we live. As it is said, "Actions speak louder than words." We have to live as Jesus has instructed, loving each other, caring for the less fortunate and pleading for the poor. Let us not grow tired but continue to share how the Lord has transformed our lives. Our testimonies could inspire others to come to Jesus.

Prayer: Abba Father, may I bear witness to your love.  
Amen.

## Sunday December 4

Second Sunday of Advent

Isaiah  
11:1-10

Psalms 72:  
1-2,7-8,12-13,17

Romans  
15:4-9

Matthew  
3:1-12

Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.

In the second Sunday of Advent, in what we read as a Messianic prophecy, the Hebrew Scripture offers an early vision of “living well.” The prophet Isaiah foresees an “utopia” where a righteous ruler brings perfect justice with perfect peace. In a gentle menagerie of wolf with lamb and leopard with kid, there is a kind of wonderland of imagination. The playful coexistence of wild animal and infant child indicate humanity and creation living in sacred balance with one another.

We fear being branded as foolish, unreasonable or unrealistic if we set our sights on what we know in our hearts to be completeness of life for all. But in this time of Advent, we are prompted that it is God’s dreams that we are to set in front of us like a kind of horizon. And God’s dreams — righteousness, justice, peace, harmony — are bold. We must take sensible, careful, and sometimes what feel like terribly incremental steps forward in a particular path of justice or peace.

The second reading from the letter of Saint Paul to the Romans, speaks about hope. Hope is an amazing thing. If we can cling to hope amid trials, a difficult situation can become endurable because hope will empower us to get through it. As believers hope is a crucial part of life. We must cling to certain things so that we can come out on the other side of troubles unharmed by the world around us.

The Gospel of God’s kingdom is the same through the ages. The lesson in fact predates the Lord Jesus and goes back through the prophets to Moses and right to the beginning of humanity. The message is simple - we must repent. To repent means plainly to change our mind. We must see our sin for the outrage that it is. We might have once thought that we were OK with God, but now we must understand that he is not impressed with anything that we say or do. A new heart is needed, and that comes as a gift from God.

The second step is to turn to God. We no longer run our own lives as if we are our own king or queen. We acknowledge that God alone is our King. He is the one who created us and gave us life. Therefore, we are to be under His supremacy. Let us change our attitudes, and allow the Lord to be in control.

To become a follower of the Lord Jesus entails a total change in our life direction and our lifestyle. It means giving up on the things which displease God and living His way instead. When we do this, we stop being God’s foes and we become His friends.

Prayer: Abba Father, what an awesome privilege it is to be called your friend.  
Help me to live for you in every part of my life. Amen.

## Monday December 5

Second Week of Advent

Isaiah  
35:1-10

Psalm  
85:9-14

Luke  
5:17-26

God Himself is coming to save you.

The time of Advent has come. While getting ready for the Christmas celebrations, there is little time to think about what this season is all about. Our Savior's birth is the reason. He has come to save us from our sinful lives, sickness, and bondage. He comes to heal and restore and that is why this season is special. In the Gospel proclamation, Jesus looks at the faith of the men who brought the paralyzed man. Sickness was associated with sin and the paralytic may have feared to approach the Lord because of his sin. Looking at the faith of his friends, the Lord Jesus not only heals the paralytic but also forgives his sins. The Lord Jesus saw his inner need beyond his physical ailment and reached out in forgiveness to him. In our day to day lives we too are called to practice the "Way of Holiness". First to have a personal relationship with the Lord and then to draw others into this experience. We may not be able to preach publicly about Kingdom Values, but by living according to the Word of God we can witness to Him.

Prayer: Abba Father, I come to you bringing my own emotional, spiritual, and physical paralysis and I thank you for healing me and delivering me. Amen.

## Tuesday December 6

Second Week of Advent

Isaiah  
40:1-11

Psalm  
96:1-3,10-13

Matthew  
18:12-14

The Word of God stands forever.

In today's first reading Isaiah says that God "tends his flock like a shepherd: He gathers the lambs in His arms and carries them close to His heart; he gently leads those that have young". If you are a parent who is going through pain and suffering because of your children, remember the Lord is carrying you close to his heart. If you are a leader going through hardships because of those who look up to you, remember He is carrying you close to his heart. Have your actions negatively affected those who are dependent on you? Even still He is carrying you and He can make it right for all, for He comes with mighty power. The love of God towards His own is revealed in the Gospel proclamation through the parable of the lost sheep. He leaves the 99 to seek out the one that is lost. His love is limitless and has no boundaries. Each one is precious in the presence of God and is held by His love and mercy that surpass everything. Let us put aside our own understanding and hold on to his Word, for 'the Word of God stands forever'(Is 40:8)

Prayer: Abba Father, open our hearts to Your Word, by the power of the Holy Spirit, so that we may hold onto the truths revealed by you. Amen.

## Wednesday December 7

Memorial of Saint Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

Isaiah  
40:25-31

Psalm  
103:1-4,8,10

Matthew  
11:28-30

Jesus carries our burdens with us.

My children love to play a lot and when they get hurt while playing, they would come to me or my spouse to get consoled. Jesus is telling us to come to him as we are. This choice of going to Jesus should not be only when we cannot handle things, but rather the opposite. A person may be carrying heavy burdens of sin, excessive demands of work, oppression and persecution, or weariness in the search for God. Jesus frees people from these and other burdens. The 'rest' that Jesus promises is love, healing, and peace with God, not the end of all labor. A relationship with God changes wearisome toil into spiritual productivity. In what sense is Jesus' yoke easy? The yoke emphasizes the challenges and difficulties of partnering with Christ, who does not offer a life of luxurious ease - the yoke is still an oxen's tool. But it is a shared yoke, with the weight falling on bigger shoulders than ours. We are participating in life's responsibilities with a great Partner and now that frown can turn into a smile and that gripe into a song.

Prayer: Abba Father, may I not grow weary in following Jesus.  
Amen.

## Thursday December 8

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Genesis  
3:9-15,20

Psalm  
98:1-4

Ephesians  
1:3-6,11-12

Luke  
1:26-38

Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you.

Today we celebrate the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, which refers to the conception of Mary without sin in the womb of her mother, St. Anne. Let us honour our Mother who "by a singular grace and privilege of Almighty God, and in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, Saviour of the human race, was kept free from all stain of original sin". The responsorial Psalm is so apt, as it asks us to exalt the Lord because he has done marvellous deeds. Indeed the marvellous deed of our salvation came through the Lord's birth. Mary completely surrendered to God's will by yielding to the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit. The spiritual communion that we lost at the Garden of Eden because of our first parents, who believed in the lie of the enemy than trusting in God's word, was restored back by our Blessed Mother by her total trust and surrender to God's word. May we have hearts that exalt God's goodness and mercy. May we marvel at the splendour of God's grace and love to us his children.

Prayer: Abba Father, we exult in your love and mercy.  
Amen.

## Friday December 9

Second Week of Advent

Isaiah  
48:17-19

Psalm  
1:1-4,6

Matthew  
11:16-19

Let us constantly improve ourselves.

There is a well known saying: "If there is a will there is a way." The Jewish leaders were trying to accuse Jesus and John the Baptist. The same thing is taking place in our daily life within our family, neighbourhood and workplace. We are quick to find the mistakes and failures of others. When we try to correct someone am I doing it with love and concern? Or do I highlight someone's mistakes to put them into shame? If so we too are behaving like the Pharisees. Am I having an attitude that says "I am right and you are wrong?". There is no one who is perfect other than God. We are called to focus on our failures not those of others. Our priority should be to correct our mistakes. Further, we need to pray to God, to open our eyes to find our failures in our discipleship and seek the power of the Holy Spirit to help us to identify our weaknesses daily. Recognizing our failures is only possible with the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, let us ask the Holy Spirit to help us to live a life of meaningful discipleship.

Prayer: Abba Father, help me to identify my failures.  
Amen.

## Saturday December 10

Second Week of Advent

Sirach  
48:1-4,9-11

Psalm 80:  
2-3,15-16,18-19

Matthew  
17:9-13

Come down from the mountain.

Today's Gospel proclamation talks about how the disciples ask our Lord Jesus about a matter concerning Elijah. They ask this question which has confused them on their way down from the mountain. These disciples had just witnessed the Transfiguration of our Lord. A glorious mountain top experience that would have made them feel closer to God. We also have such mountain top experiences where we encounter our Lord and where we feel so close to Him. We want to remain on that mountain top and do not want that experience to end. But just like the disciples we also have to come down from the mountain. It is on the way down that Jesus speaks to the disciples and gives them a revelation. Likewise it is on our way down from the mountain that Jesus is waiting to speak to us and to strengthen us further in our Journey. Are we hearing the voice of our Lord on our way down the mountain or are our hearts hardened that we do not hear His voice. Let us learn to open our ears and hear his voice even when we feel down.

Prayer: Abba Father, help me to hear your voice even though I am stuck in the depths. Amen.



## Sunday December 11

Third Sunday of Advent

Isaiah  
35:1-6,10

Psalm  
146:6-10

James  
5:7-10

Matthew  
11:2-11

Have courage and hold on to God.

“Say to those who are afraid: Have courage, do not fear. See, your God comes, demanding justice.” (Isaiah 35:4)

On this Third Sunday of Advent, the readings are inviting us to wait on the Lord. The meaning of the season of Advent is also the same. We are asked to wait in preparation for both the celebration of the Nativity of Christ and the return of Christ at the second coming.

The third candle we light today is a rose colored candle and it symbolizes joy. It is also called the Shepherd’s Candle, it reminds us of the joy that the world experienced at the birth of Jesus.

The first reading invites us to remember the Lord we always trust. We may be going through difficult times in these days of festivity with financial issues or social, psychological or even spiritual conflicts. But the Lord is talking to us and asking us to remember that He’s watching over us individually and all our problems are known to the Lord. He knows exactly what we need and He knows the perfect timing.

Personally, this year has been quite challenging with the situations we had to face as a nation and it directly affected our day-to-day lives. But God has taken care of every little thing that we did not know that even existed or that could have come up in the future and affected us. Isn’t this the faithfulness of our God? His hand on us will never leave us.

We are asked and reminded to trust in Him. He is promising miracles to those in need and joy to those who are weeping. He is the maker of heaven and earth. This is what we need to remind ourselves each time we fall. Everything we see and feel is His, our Father’s. He knows what we need and He provides everything we need.

So why waste our time worrying? We should rather change that time of worrying to time of praise and worship like how we learned in the prayer of Nehemiah. We need to claim the promises He has already given us. This is the joy we need to celebrate today.

God promised us salvation and He sent His only Son to this world just as He promised. Jesus has promised His second coming which will also take place in His time.

Holding on seems unrealistic and unexciting only when we are impatient. And we become impatient when we do not trust someone. The second reading reminds us that patience is the key to this joy He is promising us. “Be patient, and do not lose heart, because the Lord’s coming is near.” (James 5:8)

Prayer: Abba Father, give me the strength to wait upon Your promises.  
Amen.

## Monday December 12

Memorial of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Zechariah  
2:14-17

Judith  
13:18-19

Luke  
1:39-45

Let nothing worry you or disturb you.

“Listen, put it into your heart, most little of my children: let nothing frighten or grieve you, let not your heart be disturbed, do not fear any sickness or anguish. Am I not here, who am your Mother? Are you not under my protection? Am I not your health? Are you not happily within the folds of my mantle, held safely in my arms? Do you need anything more? Let nothing else worry you or disturb you”. These are the words of Our Lady of Guadalupe to St. Juan Diego spoken on this day in 1531. Mother Mary is reminding us to set aside our fears and place our complete trust in her son Jesus Christ. Mary's words invite us to hold on to God's power and grace that she received in a unique way at the annunciation. We are called to listen to God's voice and say “Yes”, even when we do not fully understand it. This Christmas, let us recommit ourselves as disciples of Jesus, so that His saving presence and redeeming love will envelop our lives through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Prayer: Abba Father, we declare that your Word will accomplish what you desire and achieve its purpose for which you sent it. Amen.

## Tuesday December 13

Memorial of Saint Lucy, Virgin and Martyr

Zephaniah  
3:1-2,9-13

Psalm  
34:2-3,6-7,17-19,23

Matthew  
21:28-32

Focus on reaching God's kingdom.

The Lord Jesus speaks about the importance of obedience. It is not so much about following rules and regulations alone, more importantly it is about setting our priorities in order. Sometimes we ignore what is being said in the Word of God to receive material benefits. Let us change such patterns and learn to follow God's leading in our lives. We have been sent to this earth for a purpose. We are being guided, coached, and led by divine providence and direction which allows us to fulfill the assigned purpose. Sadly, many of us fail to listen and follow the heavenly direction due to increased self-centredness within our hearts – potentially losing the sight of God due to our own arrogant and proud behaviours. Most of the time we are quick to judge people and we let others down. Through today's Gospel proclamation we are reminded of the importance of being humble, honest, and truthful. Living with a repentant heart is important as we desire to reach the Kingdom of Heaven.

Prayer: Abba Father, we pray that our hearts will stay focused on the values of the kingdom than on the pleasures of this world. Amen.

## Wednesday December 14

Memorial of Saint John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor of the Church

Isaiah  
45:6-8,18,21-25

Psalm  
85:9-14

Luke  
7:18-23

God welcomes doubters.

Have you had doubts about God? Have you wondered if God was big enough to take care of your needs? Once in a while during our journey with the Lord, doubt may creep in. There were many characters in the Bible who doubted God. Some examples are Sarah, Gideon, Elijah, St. Peter and St. Thomas. When in doubt, the Bible encourages us not to lose faith, but instead to fight to find the truth. 2 Timothy 4:7 says, "I have fought the good fight...I have kept the faith." We can allow God to clear our minds and enlighten us to the realities of who God really is. John the Baptist sends his disciples to Jesus to find out if He really is the Messiah. Jesus said, "Go and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive sight..., the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor." Today, Jesus is speaking to the seed of doubt in our hearts. Instead of looking inside ourselves, or outside at the world for answers to our doubt, let us come to Him and give Him our doubts. He will eradicate the doubts.

Prayer: Abba Father, I place the doubts I have about You at Your feet. Speak to me and clear the doubts from my mind. Amen.

## Thursday December 15

Third Week of Advent

Isaiah  
54:1-10

Psalm  
30:2,4-6,11-13

Matthew  
7:24-30

Solid grounds.

In our lives we take every effort to build our futures on firm footings; also to develop on those footings to higher places, better lifestyles, better living not only for ourselves but also for our future generations. Today Jesus is calling us to build ourselves on higher grounds not according to human understanding. We were called before the creation of this world to be holy and pure by the creator himself. How do we become pure and holy as the Father has called us. Jesus teaches us that the calling is to be rooted in the Word no matter what. He is the same today and tomorrow as he was yesterday. His Word does not change, his promises do not change. However we have to be on levelled grounds, rooted deeply in God. Deep in our hearts, deep in our being we might have lies, negativity rooted beyond our understanding. But God called the barren women to be joyful as his Word reaps in places where we thought were futile. He has called us to see him at the end of the journey, where we flourish in the Word with which he nourished us.

Prayer: Abba Father, thank you for the gift of life.  
Amen.

## Friday December 16

Third Week of Advent

Isaiah  
56:1-3,6-8

Psalm  
67:2-3,5,7-8

John  
5:33-36

Salvation for all.

As we await in joyful anticipation for the coming of our Saviour, the Word of God adds into that joy with one promise after another. Today's first reading reminds us that our God does not make distinctions between people. Where we come from does not matter anymore, but what is important is what we do and are willing to do. "Blessed is the one who does this: Who keeps the sabbath free from profanation, and his hand from any evildoing." This is the criteria of selection. During this time of preparation, let the Word of God be a guiding light to examine our hearts and minds. What is it that has drawn us away from the love of God? Let us dig deep and find the lies of our heart that keep us away from climbing His Holy Mountain. In today's Gospel proclamation the Lord Jesus reminds us not to look elsewhere for direction. For Jesus, our Saviour has lived a life of holiness and invites us to imitate Him as we wait to welcome Him into our midst once again. Come Lord Jesus!

Prayer: Abba Father, open our eyes to the truths of your kingdom and lead us to Your Holy Mountain to worship You. Amen.

## Saturday December 17

Third Week of Advent

Genesis  
49:2,8-10

Psalm  
72:1-4, 7-8, 17

Matthew  
1:1-17

The Family Tree of Jesus.

Recently after the death of a loved one, some of our cousins came together and created a WhatsApp group. The motive of this group was to make our family tree to trace our relatives and map the roots for our younger generation. It was a delightful and thrilling experience as it revived our long lost relationships. In today's Gospel proclamation we see how the Bible has recorded the genealogy of Jesus, and the lineage of the Lord Jesus is traced accordingly. Here we come across the bloodline of Saint Joseph his foster father the spouse of the Blessed Virgin Mary. According to the Jewish expectation the long awaited promised Messiah had to be a descendant of King David, thus this criterion had to be met in the plan of salvation. "He will be great and he will be called the son of the Most High, and the Lord will give him the throne of his ancestor David" (Luke 1:32) All biblical prophecies and promises are fulfilled and will be fulfilled. Therefore let us hold on to the Lord and his Holy Word.

Prayer: Abba Father, remind us how you accomplish your plans for us through your steadfast love, that we may trust you completely. Amen.

## Sunday December 18

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Isaiah  
7:10-14

Psalm  
24:1-6

Romans  
1:1-7

Matthew  
1:18-24

Listen to the voice of the Lord.

In today's first reading we meet a terrified King Ahaz who is being threatened by the coalition of the kings of Israel and Aram. Their objective is to dethrone Ahaz, a descendant of David, from Jerusalem. Even though Ahaz is not a righteous king, God breaks into the situation through the prophet Isaiah.

The Lord wants King Ahaz to trust in Him, that He will protect Jerusalem. But Ahaz, being a man of little faith is drawn towards a more practical solution, which is to obtain the support of a powerful nation; the Assyrians. However, Ahaz does not reveal his hand, but plays games and tries to hide behind words that look devout. At stake here is not only the fate of Ahaz and Jerusalem, but the promise of God to David. But the Lord sees the heart.

I see Ahaz in myself. Given a situation where I have to take a decision, I would rather rely on pragmatism than pause and listen to the voice of the Lord. Sometimes I may not even want to listen to the voice of the Lord, because I am sold out on an idea and do not want to even think outside of that. Often times the logic and reasoning of this world, seems more plausible, practical and realistic than God's message and will. This is the challenge: can we trust God? Or would we follow what the world says. Remember that the Lord has a purpose for our lives.

Even when we are walking away, like Ahaz, God breaks in for the sake of the greater purpose of our lives. If we do not listen and turn to him, we will not only "weary the Lord", but we will "weary" the people we are responsible for. God declares that He himself will intervene in an unimaginable way and fulfil his purpose. When we look back, we will only be able to say "Emmanuel" – God was with us.

David was so pleasing to God, that God wanted His own Son to be known as a Son of David. God breaks in to the life of the unrighteous Ahaz because of His faithfulness to David. When we respond to God and are pleasing to him, it will not only bless us, but our children, their children, and their children's children.

Today's Gospel proclamation confirms this. The Blessed Mother, through her "fiat", is blessed to see divine intervention in an impossible situation. Saint Joseph, who wanted to walk away from the Blessed Mother is blessed with an encounter, a divine experience and participates in the fulfilment of the prophesy originally given to Ahaz. Generations to come are blessed by this act.

Prayer: Abba Father, may I hear your voice and obey it.  
Amen.

## Monday December 19

Fourth Week of Advent

Judges  
13:2-7,24-25

Psalm  
71:3-6,16-17

Luke  
1:5-25

God's power does not depend on our holiness.

Today's readings remind us that God's glory and power does not depend on our holiness nor readiness. In the First Reading, Manoah's wife is told that despite her limiting circumstance, the Lord will have His way, and bring life to the man destined by God to begin the deliverance of Israel from the power of the Philistines. The woman asks no questions, and the Lord fulfils His Word. In the Gospel, a similar miracle occurs; however, in this instance, Zechariah questions the angel. He lists out the many reasons as to why God's Word could not possibly come to pass. Zechariah mistakenly assumes that he and his wife's limitations would hinder a mighty move of God. Consequently, he is silenced until the prophecy was fulfilled. In the face of God's perfect glory, questions and doubts shift the focus back on to us. How self-centric to think we could pose any barriers to God's plans? It is vain to assume that our limitations are a limitation to Him. May we not stutter in disbelief nor doubt as Zechariah did, but simply allow God to be God.

Prayer: Abba Father, expand our spiritual imagination, so that we may not limit your mighty works, but be filled with awe and reverence at Your power. Amen.

## Tuesday December 20

Fourth Week of Advent

Isaiah  
7:10-14

Psalm  
24:1-6

Luke  
1:26-38

Surrender to the plan of God.

Today's Gospel proclamation gives the narrative of how the "Word became flesh". God becoming a man: Emmanuel, God is with us. Since the time of the great patriarchs and prophets this is the moment the whole world has been looking forward to. This is the mystery that we enter into every time we pray the 'Hail Mary'. Have we looked at this moment with awe when we pray the Rosary? In the first reading we read how through the prophet Isaiah, God revealed the plan of salvation several hundred years before the birth of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. With God nothing happens randomly. He has a perfect plan for our lives, a plan that he designed even before the creation of the world. We need to cooperate with the plan of God as the Blessed Mother did. She said "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord, let it be done to me as you have said". Today let us surrender to God an area in our lives that we controlled, and ask the Blessed Mother for her intercession for us.

Prayer: Abba Father, give us your grace to surrender to your plan. Amen.

## Wednesday December 21

Fourth Week of Advent

Song of Songs  
2:8-14

Psalm  
33:2-3,11-12,20-21

Luke  
1:39-45

We wait in hope for the Lord.

In this season of Advent as we eagerly await the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, there is a joyful yearning in our heart, a longing that is intensified as we count down the days till Christmas. This waiting, yearning and rejoicing is portrayed in the first reading, depicting the union of God with his people. In today's Gospel proclamation we see Mother Mary and Elizabeth greet each other and Elizabeth filled with the Holy Spirit proclaims a profound truth "Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfil his promises!" Mother Mary is a beautiful example of someone holding onto God's word. Even when things are dark, even when things do not go the way she anticipated, she holds onto the word she was given, and it bears fruit. Advent is the season where God assures his people that winter will soon be over. In the winter of our lives when promises seem to be far from being fulfilled, let us keep our eyes on God, and like Mother Mary hold on to the promises with hearts filled with eager anticipation of the joy yet to come.

Prayer: Abba Father, we come to you with hearts filled with hope and yearning. You are the Way maker, you are the promise keeper. Amen.

## Thursday December 22

Fourth Week of Advent

1 Samuel  
1:24-28

1 Samuel  
2:1,4-8

Luke  
1:46-56

Take God's love to a love starved world.

Today's readings speak of two women who submitted themselves completely to God. God's power can be manifested in the physical realm only when 'Faith' meets 'Surrender'. These two mighty women witnessed their reward! When we meditate on the response of the Blessed Mother we realize how much of a prophetess she was. She had full awareness of the struggle of her people and the dire need of a saviour, a messiah. How beautiful and eloquent her response when an angel of God had just shared such shocking news. Shock and fear ordinarily overwhelm us to such a degree that thinking straight becomes a challenge. However look at the Spirit filled response of a young maiden: "My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour!" Her entire being rejoicing in uncontainable joy and awe. We who are baptized in the Holy Spirit should be much more humble, much more joyful, praise filled and hope filled because God lives in us! Are we living proof of this truth?

Prayer: Abba Father, take control of every cell in our being so that we may be witnesses of your love, to a love starved world. Amen.

## Friday December 23

Fourth Week of Advent

Malachi  
3:1-4, 23-24

Psalm  
25:4-5, 8-10, 14

Luke  
1:57-66

His ways and direction are the path to heaven.

The psalmist touches my heart when he says "Direct me in your ways. Lord and teach me your paths" This reminds me of a sweet and simple but tough lesson that our daughter taught us. As we were journeying deep into a spiritual path she said that before every action she would remind herself of these letters WWJD – What Would Jesus Do? Isn't that the direction that He gives us? The Path we are led? Our day consists of thoughts, words and deeds. Are we able to take a step back at each point to remind ourselves, What Would Jesus Do? Can we continue in that negative thought pattern, or say that hurtful word, or react in anger and judgement of others or ignore the emotional and physical needs of others? In other words isn't this the prayer we pray at every Eucharistic celebration in the Penitential Rite when we prepare our hearts to receive Jesus who is our Saviour? Let us remember this simple truth and know that the Lord Jesus directs our path in the most simple ways. Let us respond to situations and not react.

Prayer: Abba Father, help us to be simple and to walk in your ways.  
Amen.

## Saturday December 24

Fourth Week of Advent

2 Samuel  
7:1-5,8-12,14-16

Psalm  
89:2-5,27,29

Luke  
1:67-79

Preparing the way for the Lord.

Zechariah's prophesy, answered a crucial question, 'What will this child become?' John was the prophet who prepared the way of the Lord. On Christmas Eve, we may have last minute preparations. While all of this is done, there is a greater preparation expected of us; as John the Baptist prepared the way for Christ, we are called to share the knowledge of salvation in preparation for Christ's second coming. How do we do this?

"Take the word of God with you as you go.

Take the seeds of God's word and make them grow.

Take the peace of God as you go.

Take the seeds of God's peace and make them grow.

Take the joy of God as you go.

Take the seeds of God's joy and make them grow.

Take the love of God as you go.

Take the seeds of God's love and make them grow." (J. Harrison)

Prayer: Abba Father, help me share the message of hope that I may bring light to others at this holy time. Amen.



**Sunday December 25**

**A Happy and Blessed Christmas to all!**

**Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord**

Isaiah  
52:7-10

Psalm  
98:1-6

Hebrews  
1:1-6

John  
1:1-8

**Celebrating the Mission, Message and Messenger**

Recently, the writer of quite a few Gospel songs almost renounced his church and faith due to certain scandals in his church. Further, a well-known apologist after his demise was found to have led a double life. Though they drew us close to God with their talents and inspiration there was a splintering in their message, mission and ministry.

In contrast, today we celebrate the Birth of a person who was a merging of so many key aspects. He is the word and so He is the message. He came as the Messenger revealing to us words of life and establishing a deep relationship between us and the Father. And His mission was that we be saved from sin and delivered to the Kingdom of Heaven.

As the word says in Him was life and light of the world. In our Lord Jesus we find the culmination or the merger of a life-changing and world-changing mission, a humble inspiring messenger and a deep soul stirring message. And they all hold together bringing us daily inspiration and hope. We can turn to Him whose feet bring the Good News into our lives.

Is it only the Good News that He brings us? No, this message and person are packed with salvific power, a potential to urge us daily from our slumber and sin and when we invite Him into our mess and misery there is a peace that passes all understanding that takes over. We are made whole.

Today, we do not just celebrate the presence of our Lord Jesus on this earth, but each of us today like the Blessed Mother, through a life of repentance and prayer can carry this child's presence in our hearts. Today we celebrate the fact that each of us has the potential to become walking tabernacles of God's love, power and presence.

We experience His presence in our prayer time and we share that presence and power as we engage in the world. As he became flesh and dwelled among us, we are transformed from a flesh led life to a spirit filled life and we pass on the baton of God's presence to people around us.

What is the acid test of knowing if Christ Jesus is within us? We must be singing a new song; we are constantly reminded of His love for us; we are able to recognise the wonders God has done for us and we are capable of making a joyful noise in the midst of tribulation. More importantly we are able to love as the song says "And they'll know we are Christians by our love." In fact, while we were still sinners Christ died for us and gave His life for us.

Let us celebrate this message, mission and messenger. Happy Birthday Jesus... you came to this earth and brought us peace and joy.

**Prayer: Abba Father, we cherish the day when you sent your Son Jesus into the world to give us the Good News of our salvation. Amen.**

## Monday December 26

Feast of Saint Stephen, First Martyr

Acts  
6:8-10; 7:54-59

Psalm  
31:3-6,8,16-17

Matthew  
10:17-22

Who would you die for?

Today as we celebrate the feast of Saint Stephen, we are reminded of a deeper calling in our lives. Saint Stephen is considered to be the first person to be martyred for his faith. His act of martyrdom is an important part in the story of conversion of Saint Paul. In the early Church, Saint Stephen served as a deacon, ministering to the poor. Martyrdom may not be our 'cup of tea'. But it is a response given from one's heart to a deep experience of the love of God. Today's readings remind us, that to say yes to the Lord Jesus, is to say no to many things of the world. This calling is placed in our families, workplaces, schools, and in our personal lives. It is about who we choose to honour and love every second of our lives. Is it our friends, our family, ourselves, or is it God above all of the others? This will result in rejection, in persecution and challenges. In today's Gospel proclamation the Lord Jesus assures us, that when that day comes, the Holy Spirit Himself will give us the words to speak.

Prayer: Abba Father, fill our hearts with the fire of Your love to be a witness to our faith. Amen.

## Tuesday December 27

Feast of Saint John, Apostle and Evangelist

1 John  
1:1-4

Psalm  
97:1-2,5-6,11-12

John  
20:1-8

We have seen eternal life.

Today the church celebrates the feast of St John, the Apostle. He is known as the disciple whom Jesus loved. This is indeed an expression of how close he was held in the Lord's heart. Today's Gospel proclamation points out that he was the first disciple to reach the empty tomb, the symbol of the resurrection of Jesus. The Gospel says "he saw and believed". This disciple who accompanied Jesus right to the foot of the cross, looking at the empty tomb, now encounters Him as the Lord who became man for the salvation of humankind. The resurrection of Jesus is the key to our faith which in fact gives reason to make His birth special. St. John elaborates on the same in the first reading. Jesus is the Son of the Father who existed from the very beginning, the Word that became flesh, who was crucified but resurrected. He is the Word through whom we gain eternal life. Just like St John did, we are called to discover Jesus as the Lord and Saviour of our life and share in His eternal glory with the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Prayer: Abba Father, we thank you for Jesus our Lord and Saviour, through whom we gain eternal life. Amen.

## Wednesday December 28

Feast of the Holy Innocents, Martyrs

1 John  
1:5 -- 2:2

Psalm  
124:2-5,7-8

Matthew  
2:13-18

The blood of Jesus purifies us.

We are sinners, but if we believe in Jesus then we can walk in the light. According to the scriptures while we were sinners God chose us because of his great mercy. No one can call themselves sinless because it is impossible. God knows our weaknesses from the beginning, but he has given us tremendous freedom which could sometimes be frightening. When I fall into sin, it takes some time to realise that I am already caught up in sin because sin gives temporary joy and false freedom. Therefore we easily get caught up in illusions which creates fake persons in us. This journey is not easy but we have a loving God who knows everything and he is ready to forgive us and purify us with the precious blood of Jesus. Only he can make our lives meaningful. Therefore let us turn to him and ask forgiveness for our sins. As Catholics we have access to the Sacrament of reconciliation, let us confess and become right with God and let us enjoy his mercy and favor in our lives, for he is a loving and merciful God.

Prayer: Abba Father, wash us with the precious blood of Jesus so that we can see you face to face in heaven. Amen.

## Thursday December 29

Fifth Day in the Octave of Christmas

1 John  
2:3-11

Psalm  
96:1-3,5-6

Luke  
2:22-35

Let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.

When reflecting on today's Gospel proclamation, this beautiful lyric came to mind, "Mary did you know that your baby boy is heaven's perfect Lamb?". It is not doves or pigeons that were the sacrifice, the true sacrifice was carried in the arms of St. Joseph and the Blessed Mother; the little baby nestled comfortably was the eternal king, now groomed to be God's chosen sacrifice, the light of the nations, the reason for the season. We need to realise that every human being matters in God's greater plan. The Blessed Mother in her times would hardly have mattered to society, but in the society of God's Kingdom she mattered immensely. Therefore, none should be discredited. Today's passage also reveals what transpires when we are surrendered to the Holy Spirit. Like Simeon who held on to the promise revealed to him, we do not know when we will see the fulfillment of God's promises. At the right time Simeon was moved to be at the right place to welcome the Prince of Peace, who brings joy to the world.

Prayer: Abba Father, fill me with your Spirit so that I may be a blessing to the world. Amen.

## Friday December 30

Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph

Sirach  
3:2-6,12-14

Psalm  
128:1-5

Matthew  
2:13-15,19-23

### Becoming a Holy Family in Christ.

Joseph was one of Jacob's twelve sons. He was sold into slavery in Egypt. During that period he looked up to God and not his pitiable condition. The Lord spoke to him through dreams so that he would be instrumental in saving his family and the people of Israel. The Lord too goes into exile and anguish as did His ancestors. Persecution begins with His birth and follows Him till His death. Joseph His earthly Father too interpreted dreams, thus taking Mary and his Son to Egypt in the first instance and subsequently to Israel and Nazareth. All this was done to save and protect his family. Jesus would probably have been about two years old when He was brought back to Nazareth. In our own families don't we go into sort of exilic and post exilic periods? Times of despair and eventual happiness? The crises within the family and from outside may bring us into a state of helplessness. But realizing that the Lord is in our struggle we can rest assured that He will give strength and stand by us till victory is assured.

Prayer: Abba Father, you know the struggles and challenges I face in my relationships. I believe that you would see me through it all. Amen.

## Saturday December 31

Seventh Day in the Octave of Christmas

1 John  
2:18-21

Psalm  
96:1-2,11-13

John  
1: 1-18

### Allow the Light to shine in and through you.

The last day of the year 2022! The Church reminds us of who we are and whose we are, irrespective of what has been happening throughout the year. We often wage battles in our life, and that is between darkness and light. Many things happen in and around us to make our world dark and defeated. Let us take a moment to look back at the year we are leaving behind. May be we have fallen to sin, acceding defeat in life. Today's Gospel proclamation reminds us of a simple truth about this battle between light and darkness. The moment a ray of light is allowed to enter a dark room, darkness flees without a fight. If so, why do we struggle with darkness in life? It is because we choose to keep the windows of our mind and heart closed. Today, let us accept the truth that God has made us His children. Let us open our hearts to invite the Light of the world into our lives and dispel the darkness. The Son, who alone knows the Father, who is one with the Father, will make Him known to us in a new way in the new year 2023!

Prayer: Abba Father, Thank You for the year that is about to end.  
Amen.

# On Our Knees - SUBSCRIPTION FORM

(To be filled in BLOCK-CAPITAL letters)

Name : .....

Address : .....

City : .....

Postal / ZIP Code : .....

Country : .....

Telephone : .....

**Annual Subscription (12 issues):** Sri Lanka - Rs.840/-

**Payment:** Direct Deposit to Bank or Cheque

## Method of Payment:

1. Directly deposit the one-year (12 issues) fees on the following Bank Account:

**Bank** : Commercial Bank

**Branch** : Wellawatta

**Account Name** : The Community of the Risen Lord

**Account No.** : 1100087435

**Swift Code** : CCEYLK LX






**NB:** Please ensure that you post us your **Bank Deposit Slip** together with the **Subscription Form** duly filled as proof of payment to the address below.

2. Draw a cheque in favour of “**The Community of the Risen Lord**” for the subscription fee of Rs.840/- and post the cheque along with the duly filled **Subscription Form** to the address below:

**THE COMMUNITY OF THE RISEN LORD**  
**NO. 36/1, PAPILIYANA ROAD, NADIMALA, DEHIWALA**

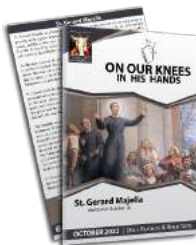
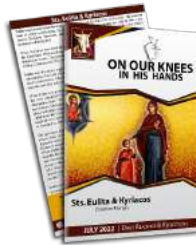
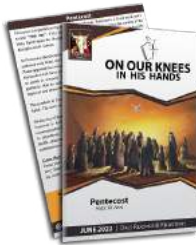
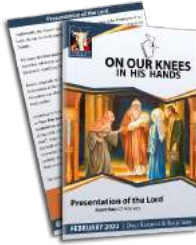
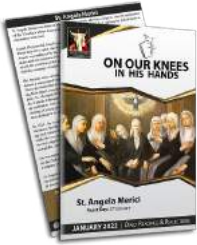
## Feedback

Dear brothers and sisters, we are always looking for ways to improve the **On Our Knees** magazine. Please take a minute and send us your comments by filling the feedback form below:

					
	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Satisfactory	Good	Excelent
REFLECTIONS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
DESIGN	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
OVERALL	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Send us your feedback through Whatsapp on [076 754 4456](tel:0767544456), or email us at [risenlordcommunity@gmail.com](mailto:risenlordcommunity@gmail.com) or send us a message via [Facebook Messenger](#) on our facebook page “**On Our Knees**”.

# Thank You



We thank you for subscribing to and reading the “**On Our Knees**” magazines throughout this year. We are confident that the Lord has spoken to you through these scripture reflections, specially during the tough times of this year. May he continue to speak to you throughout the next year as well. May you be inspired by the coming editions of the **On Our Knees** in 2023.

**WE WISH YOU A SAFE AND PEACEFUL YEAR AHEAD.**

**GOD BLESS YOU!**

