



YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY
MINISTERIO DE JÓVENES ADULTOS
Archdiocese of San Antonio

For young adults....by young adults. Escrito por jóvenes adultos ...para jóvenes adultos



YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

Archdiocese of San Antonio

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Advent Edition

The Advent Season

The Advent Wreath, is an opportunity to begin celebrating the birth of our Lord and to make our hearts truly ready to receive Him. The gradual lighting of the four candles, one on each Sunday of the Advent season, combined with the liturgical colors of the candles (purple is the penitential color used during Advent and Lent; rose is the liturgical color used only on Gaudete Sunday in Advent and Laetare Sunday in Lent) help to symbolize not only our expectation and hope in Our Savior’s first coming into the world, but also in his Second Coming as Judge at the end of the World.

On the first Sunday of Advent, you can sprinkle the wreath with holy water and bless it before the first purple candle is lit. The second Sunday two purple candles are lit, the third Sunday, two purple and one rose; and all candles are lit on the fourth Sunday.

www.catholic.org

Prayer Invitation

Sunday, November 28, 2004



Begin your Christmas season early. Celebrate Advent by lighting your own Advent wreath.

Advent Rejoicing

Isaiah 35, 1-7.10 is read at Mass on the third Sunday of Advent. The third candle of the wreath and the vestments that priests wear on this Sunday are often the color rose, which is a symbol for rejoicing. Together, this passage from Isaiah and this color remind us that the coming of the Messiah is a joyful event.

Is 35, 1–10 The Catholic Youth Bible. New American Bible

THE HOLY FAMILY

On the first Sunday after Christmas, the Catholic church celebrates the feast of the Holy Family: Jesus, Mary and Joseph. The Bible does not tell us a lot about the Holy Family. We know that Joseph was a kind and compassionate man, eager to do God’s will. He raised Jesus as his own son, even though he was not Jesus’ biological father. Jesus was raised in a home in which love and father were the norm.

We can be sure the Holy Family had their moments of conflict and crisis - all families do. Luke’s story of Jesus getting separated from his parents demonstrates that. But we can also be sure that their love and father helped them to survive such conflicts and grow stronger because of them. The church hold the Holy Family up as a model of respect, compassion, love and faith in family life.

How does you family express love and respect for one another? What crises and conflicts have you and your family survived? What can you do to bring the qualities of the Holy Family more fully into your family’s life?

Lk 2, 41–52

The Catholic Youth Bible. New American Bible



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Destined

I had that dream again. In my dream I was walking the familiar path leading to the sanctuary. The light of a full moon shone down on the path as the stars seem to engulf the night sky. I felt that at any moment the stars themselves would swoop down and carry me away with them. The entrance to the sanctuary appeared as if it was an entrance to another world. Crossing the threshold to the sanctuary I suddenly became aware of a deep silence. Following the customs, I knelt down and began praying with my eyes closed and my heart open. I felt an overwhelming sense of peace begin to envelope me, but when I opened my eyes I was shocked to see that the room had filled with a thick smoke. The smoke was so thick that I could not see the hand I waved inches away from my face. Despite all of the smoke, I still felt at peace and safe and I soon realized that I was not alone but that someone was in the room with me.

Every morning I wake up with the same sense of peace and presence as that night. The greeting of the Angel rings in my ear, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you." I was confused to hear him address me "favored one" and then to finish his speech by telling me that I would conceive a son without first knowing a man.

Though I could not fully understand how I would become pregnant by the Holy Spirit, as the angel spoke I knew without a doubt that what he spoke was the truth. All I could do was to offer my body to the Lord, that His will would be done according to His word. God's word became more evident to me after my visit with my cousin, Beth. Beth had been considered a barren woman but I was told by the Angel that she was pregnant because God himself deemed it to occur. Beth rejoiced when she saw me and said that the child she carried jumped for joy upon hearing my voice.

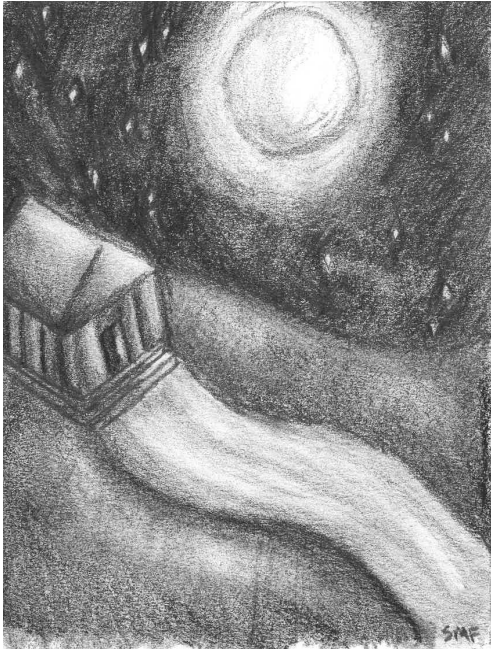
"Upon seeing the child resting on the cot the drivers began to rejoice and left the shack glorifying and praising God for all to hear."

Upon my return, I told Joe about my experience and about the child. He decided that he could not continue the engagement and he wished to dissolve the agreement. Our customs have not changed much in terms of marital agreements, so he knew that once it was discovered that I was carrying a child I would be greatly shamed by my family. Joe did not wish to cause me any pain, so he planned on carrying out the dissolution in a quiet manner. However, he returned to me the next day to tell me about his own experience. The previous night in his dreams the Angel of the Lord came to him and spoke. The Angel said, "Joe, do not be afraid to take Myra into your home. For it is through the Holy Spirit that this child has been conceived in her. She will bear a son and you are to name him Jesus, because he will save his people from sin."

I was excited and sad at the same time as I left my family's home and became a part of Joe's household. I soon took a journey with Joe to his home town, for he had a good job waiting for him. Our departure was rushed so he would not lose his opportunity and we found ourselves struggling to find room and board when we arrived. The whole city was involved in a huge celebration and all of the hotels were full. We continued to search until we

found a small farm on the outskirts of the city. The head of the household let us stay the night in a small shack. I was very happy once we found a place to rest for I was in my final days of pregnancy and began to feel the twinges of labor. During the first night in the shack I gave birth to my son, Jesus. I wrapped him in cloth and set him down on an old cot. I was unprepared for the emotions of complete love I felt for my son as I sat and watched him sleep.

Joe and I were almost asleep when there was a sudden knocking on the door. Joe opened the door to find some truck driv-



ers standing outside their door. The drivers quickly explained that an Angel had come to them at a rest stop. The angel had told them, "Do not be afraid; for I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying on a cot." The drivers then drove to the city to see the thing that had happened and that the Lord has let them know about. Upon seeing the child resting on the cot the drivers began to rejoice and left the shack glorifying and praising God for all to hear. They told everyone they came upon all that they had been told and all that they had seen according to the word of God.





San Nicolás: Hombre, discípulo, patrocinador

En esta temporada de Adviento, ¿qué es lo que encontraremos en las decoraciones brillantes de la temporada? Oremos que sea amor, compasión y generosidad— acciones que fueron vividas por nuestro Salvador Jesús Christo y otros individuos que han seguido el ejemplo de Jesús durante todo el tiempo. Para la inspiración, no necesitamos buscar mas alla que un hombre real quien es un discípulo y patrocinador— San Nicolás.

La historia verdadera de Santa Claus comienza con Nicolás, quien nació durante el tercer siglo en Patara, un pueblecito en lo que ahora es Turquía. Sus padres ricos, que lo criaron como un cristiano devoto, murieron en una epidemia cuando Nicolás era niño. Obedeciendo las palabras de Jesús a “vender todo lo que es tuyo y dar el dinero a los pobres”, Nicolás usó su herencia entera para ayudar a los necesitados, los enfermos y los que sufren. Él dedicó su vida a servir a Dios y se convirtió en obispo de Myra. El obispo Nicolás fue conocido por toda la tierra por su generosidad a los que estaban en necesidad, su amor por los niños y su preocupación por los marineros y los barcos. A través de los siglos, muchas historias y leyendas de la vida y los hechos de San Nicolás han sido contadas. Estos relatos nos ayudan entender su personalidad extraordinaria y porque él es tan amado y venerado como un protector y ayudante de los necesitados.

Una historia cuenta de un hombre pobre con tres hijas, por cuales tenía que ofrecer un dote a posibles esposos, porque si no, las hijas que no se casaran iban a ser vendidas a la esclavitud. Misteriosamente, entre diferentes ocasiones, una bolsa de oro apareció en su hogar, proporcionando los dotes que necesitaban. Se ha dicho que a veces en vez de en bolsas, el oro aparecía en forma de bolas y se encontraban en las medias o zapatos dejados enfrente de la chimenea para secarse, resultando en la costumbre de los niños colgando sus medias o dejando sus zapatos visibles y

entusiasmadamente esperando los regalos de Santa Claus.

Otra historia cuenta de tres estudiantes de teología que viajaban hacia Atenas para estudiar. Un cruel mesonero los atracó y los mató, escondiendo cada cadáver en una tina grande. Por casualidad, el obispo Nicolás, viajando por el mismo camino, llegó a este mismo mesón. Esa noche, el soñó el crimen, despertó y llamó al mesonero. Mientras Nicolás le resaba a Dios, las vidas de los tres muchachos fueron restablecidas. Así es como él es el patrocinador y protector de niños.

Varias historias cuentan de Nicolás y el mar. Cuando era joven, Nicolás buscaba lo que era bendito por medio de un peregrinación a la tierra bendita. Allí, mientras el caminaba donde Jesús caminó, Nicolás buscaba sentir y conocer más profundamente la vida, pasión y resurrección de Jesús. Regresando por medio del mar, una tempestad casi destrozaba el barco. Nicolás resó calmadamente. Los marineros, quien estaban aterrados, se asombraron cuando de repente el viento y las olas se calmaron. Así es como San Nicolás es el patrocinador de los marineros y los que viajan.

San Nicolás hizo muchos hechos buenos y generosos en secreto, esperando nada en regreso. Es conocido como el amigo y patrocinador de todos en dificultad o necesidad. Marineros llevaron sus historias por todos rumbos, resultando en muchas naciones adoptándolo como su santo patrocinador y en muchas iglesias nombradas por él.

San Nicolás fue conocido en el mundo nuevo a través de los europeos que

colonizaron este país. Aunque la reformación protestante durante el siglo 16 intento a eliminar las costumbres relacionadas a él, ese esfuerzo no tuvo mucho éxito a largo plazo. Por un tiempo, él fue usado como un patrocinador de sociedad y cuidad— no realmente como un obispo santo. Sobre el tiempo, varios artistas crearon imágenes de San Nicolás que continuamente cambiaban. El artista Alexander Anderson creó la primera imagen americana de San Nicolás para la sociedad histórica de Nueva York, y esta imagen lo mostraba como alguien que ponía regalos en las medias de los niños. La imagen de Nicolás se convirtió desde un majestuoso obispo a un duende y muchos personajes más hasta el más conocido, cual es el Santa Claus Coca-Cola de Haddon Sundblom. Comenzando en los 1930s, él diseñó estos anuncios por 35 años, estableciendo un icono de cultura comercial contemporánea que fue extendido por todo el mundo. A pesar de la amenaza de ser vencido, el San Nicolás europeo ha conservado su identidad como un obispo Cristiano y santo.

Un camino largo separa el obispo Nicolás original— quien fue sinceramente dedicado a Dios — de el Santa Claus americano de hoy en día. Quizás encuentres dentro de estas palabras un sentido nuevo y espiritual para esta temporada en vez de la frenesí que se ve como siempre en cada navidad con ningún sentido de la origen de la navidad. Trata de reflejar sobre el personaje de este excelente modelo cristiano, quien fue un hombre que verdaderamente puso Jesús al centro de su vida, ministerio y su existencia entera. Es un santo de verdad.

“Es conocido como el amigo y patrocinador de todos en dificultad o necesidad.”



Man, Disciple, Patron

This advent season, what will we find reflected in the shiny decorations of the season? Let us pray that it be love, compassion, and generosity as was lived out by our Savior Jesus Christ and other special individuals who have followed his example throughout time. For inspiration, we need not look any further than a real man, disciple, and patron - St. Nicholas. ○ The true story of Santa Claus begins with Nicholas, who was born during the third century in Patara, a village in what is now Turkey. His wealthy parents, who raised him to be a devout Christian, died in an epidemic while Nicholas was still young. Obeying Jesus' words to "sell what you own and give the money to the poor," Nicholas used his whole inheritance to assist the needy, the sick, and the suffering. He dedicated his life to serving God and was made Bishop of Myra. Bishop Nicholas became known throughout the land for his generosity to the those in need, his love for children, and his concern for sailors and ships. ○ Through the centuries many stories and legends have been told of St. Nicholas' life and deeds. These accounts help us understand his extraordinary character and why he is so beloved and revered as protector and helper of those in need. ○ One story tells of a poor man with three daughters, for which he had to offer a dowry to prospective husbands or the women unlikely to marry would be sold into slavery. Mysteriously, on three different occasions, a bag of gold appeared in their home, providing the needed dowries. The bags (sometimes told as golden balls) are said to have landed in stockings or shoes left before the fire to dry, leading to the custom of children hanging stockings or putting out shoes, eagerly awaiting gifts from Saint Nicholas.



Another story tells of three theological students traveling on their way to study in Athens. A wicked innkeeper robbed and murdered them, hiding their remains in a large pickling tub. It so happened that Bishop Nicholas, traveling along the same route, stopped at this very inn. In the night he dreamed of the crime, got up, and summoned the innkeeper. As Nicholas prayed earnestly to God the three boys were restored to life and wholeness. So he is the patron and protector of children. ○ Several stories tell of Nicholas and the sea. When he was young, Nicholas sought the holy by making a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. There as he walked where Jesus walked, he sought to more deeply experience Jesus' life, passion, and resurrection. Returning by sea, a mighty storm threatened to wreck the ship. Nicholas calmly prayed. The terrified sailors were amazed when the wind and waves suddenly calmed, sparing them all. So St. Nicholas is the patron of sailors and voyagers. ○ He did many kind and generous deeds in secret, expecting nothing in return. He is known as the friend and patron of all in trouble or need. Sailors carried his stories far



and wide, leading to many nations taking him on as their patron saint and a multitude of churches being named after him. ○ St. Nicholas was brought to the New World by various Europeans settling here. Although Protestant Reformation during the 16th century attempted to eliminate customs related to him, they had very little long-term success. For some time he was used as a patron of society and city, not really a saintly bishop. Various artists over time created continually changing images of jolly St. Nicholas. Artist Alexander Anderson created the first American image for the New York Historical Society, and it actually portrayed him in a gift-giving role with children's treats in stockings. Nicholas went from the stately European bishop, to an elf-like character, and surely others until the one we are most familiar with, Haddon Sundblom's Coca-Cola Santa. Beginning in the 1930s, he designed these advertisements for thirty-five years, establishing an icon of contemporary commercial culture which has spread around the world. Despite the threat of being overcome, the European St. Nicholas has retained his identity as a Christian bishop and saint. ○ A very long road separates the original Bishop Nicholas, genuinely devoted to God, from America's current day jolly Santa Claus. Perhaps you'll find within these words a new meaning and spiritual sense for the season rather than the usual Christmas frenzy seen every year, for many done out of habit with no sense of its origin. Strive to reflect the character of this excellent Christian model, a man who truly put Jesus at the center of his life, ministry, his entire existence. A true saint.





YAM Certification Program Renewal

Congratulations to all who participated in the first YAM Certification Program held in the Archdiocese of San Antonio this year! The course was completed with the fourth and final weekend last August. Over 70 YAs and YAMs from 23 parishes and college campuses attended with 41 participants completing all requirements for certification. They learned, gained insight, and discovered ways of dealing with YAM opportunities, coming away energized and spirit-filled – so, the work and challenges began!



How have participants practiced, experienced and adapted their skills and efforts in ministry with YAs?

A renewal gathering for all YAMCP participants will be held Saturday, Dec. 4th from 3:00-6:00pm. This will be a time to exchange ideas and lessons learned since completion of the program, learn about insights from the national young adult conference, renew course friendships, and celebrate. A highlight will be a prayer service where participants who completed certification requirements will receive their *Certificate in Ministry with Young Adults* granted by the Center for Ministry Development and Archdiocese of San Antonio. The church in San Antonio is blessed!

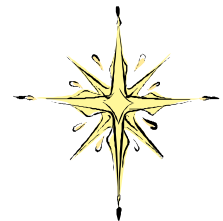
John Romo, YAAC Liason

<i>Parishes and Campuses represented by YAMCP participants</i>	
Holy Rosary	St. Leonard
Immaculate Heart of Mary	St. Luke
Our Lady of Good Counsel	St. Mary Magdalen
Our Lady of the Angels	St. Patrick
Prince of Peace	St. Peter the Apostle
Sacred Heart	St. Rose of Lima
St. Agnes	St. Thomas More
St. Ann	St. Mary's University Campus Ministry
St. Benedict	SAC Catholic Campus Ministry
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton	PAC Catholic Campus Ministry
St. Francis of Assisi	SWTJC Catholic Campus Ministry
St. Joseph-DT	



December Activities

- Our Lady of Guadalupe Young Adult Group will be participating and volunteering at Las Posadas at OLG in Helotes on Dec. 19 at 6:30 pm. All are welcome to come and participate. If you have any questions, contact Natasha at 558-9276.
- Pastorela (Christmas Play) 12/10/04 at 7pm. St. Margaret Mary's activity Center. Sponsored by Followers of Jesus Young Adult Club. If you have any questions, contact Paloma at 860-5689.





Destinado

Tuve ese sueño otra vez. En mi sueño yo caminaba por un camino conocido hacia el santuario. La luz de la luna llena iluminaba el camino mientras las estrellas parecían devorar el cielo de la noche. Yo sentí que en cualquier momento las mismas estrellas bajarían a llevarme con ellas. La entrada del santuario parecía ser una entrada a otro mundo. Cruzando el umbral del santuario, de repente estuve consciente de un silencio profundo. Siguiendo las costumbres, me arrodillé y empecé a orar con mis ojos cerrados y mi corazón abierto. Sentí una sensación abrumadora de paz rodeándome, pero cuando abrí mis ojos me sorprendí al ver que el cuarto se había llenado con un humo grueso. El humo estaba tan grueso que no podía ver la mano que movía solo unas pulgadas en frente de mi cara. En medio de todo el humo, me sentí en paz y protegida, y pronto me di cuenta que no estaba sola, si no que alguien estaba en el cuarto conmigo.

Cada mañana despierto con la misma sensación de paz y la presencia de esa noche. El saludo del Ángel suena en mi oído, “Saludos, ¡ser favorecida! El Señor está contigo”. Me confundí al oír que me llamaba “ser favorecida”, y luego que termino su oración al decirme que yo iba a concebir un hijo sin primero conocer a un hombre. Aunque no podía completamente comprender como yo quedaría embarazada del Espíritu Santo, cuando el Ángel hablaba, yo sabía sin duda que lo que él decía era la verdad. Lo único que pude hacer fue entregar mi cuerpo al Señor y dejar que su voluntad se cumpliera de acuerdo con su palabra. La palabra de Dios fue más evidente después de mi visita con mi prima Beth. Beth había sido considerada una mujer estéril, pero el Ángel me dijo que ella estaba embarazada porque el mismo Dios lo quiso así. Beth se alegró cuando me vio y dijo que la criatura que cargaba brinco de alegría al oír mi voz.

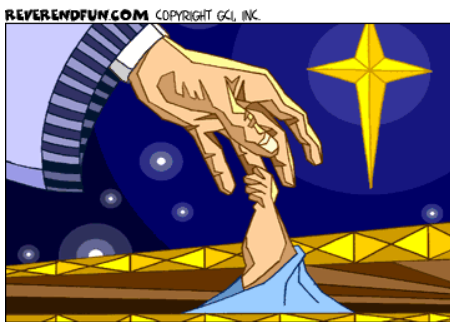
Al regresar, le conté a Joe mi experiencia y de la criatura. El decidió que no podía continuar el compromiso y deseaba disolver el acuerdo. Nuestras costumbres no han cambiado mucho en asuntos de matrimonio, y él sabía que al descubrirse que yo cargaba un hijo, yo sería la desgracia de mi familia. Joe no deseaba causarme daño, y por eso iba a disolver el compromiso discretamente. Pero, él regresó a mí el día siguiente a contarme su propia experiencia. La noche anterior en sus sueños, el Ángel del Señor se le presentó y le hablo. El Ángel dijo, “Joe, no temes de llevar a Myra a tu hogar. Es por el Espíritu Santo que este niño ha sido concebido dentro de ella. Ella dará a luz un hijo, y tu le darás el nombre Jesús porque el salvará a su gente del pecado”.

Yo estaba emocionada y triste a la misma vez cuando partí de la casa de mi familia y me uní al hogar de Joe. Al corto tiempo, fui de viaje con Joe a su pueblo natal, pues una oportunidad de empleo lo esperaba allí. Nuestra salida fue apresurada para que el no perdiera su oportunidad y nos fue difícil conseguir una habitación al llegar. El pueblo entero se encontraba participando en una celebración y todos los hoteles estaban llenos. Continuamos nuestra búsqueda hasta encontrar una granja un poco removida del pueblo. El señor de la casa nos permitió quedarnos la noche en un pequeño cuarto alejado de su casa. Yo estaba muy contenta de encontrar un lugar para descansar pues estaba ya en los últimos días del embarazo y empezaba a sentir los dolores de parto. Durante esa primera noche en el pequeño cuarto, di a luz a mi hijo Jesús. Lo envolví en tela y lo acosté en un catre viejo. Yo no estaba preparada para la emoción de amor completo que sentí por mi hijo mientras lo observaba dormir sentada ahí.

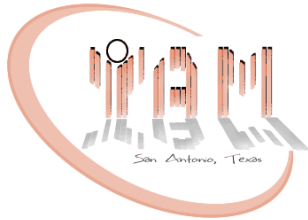
Joe y yo casi estábamos dormidos cuando de repente alguien sonaba en la puerta. Joe la abrió y parados ahí estaban unos hombres que decían ser camioneros. Rápidamente nos explicaron que el Ángel se les había aparecido en una parada de descanso. El Ángel les había dicho, “No tengan miedo; pues les traigo noticias buenas de gran alegría que será para toda la gente. Hoy ha nacido para ustedes un Salvador, cual es Cristo el Señor. Esto será una señal para ustedes: encontraran un bebé cubierto en telas y acostado en un catre”. Los camioneros viajaron al pueblo para ver lo que había sucedido, lo que el Señor les hizo saber. Al ver el niño descansando en el catre, los camioneros se alegraron y partieron de el pequeño cuarto glorificando y alabando a Dios para que todos escucharan. Les contaron a todos con quien se encontraron lo que habían escuchado y lo que habían visto en acuerdo con la palabra de Dios.

Selyna Flores,

parishioner at St. Luke's Parish



A CHILD IS BORN



YAAC is a volunteer organization of Young Catholic Adults that works with the Office of Family Life to support, communicate and advocate ministry with Young Adults. YAAC identifies the needs of Young Adults in the Archdiocese and responds with events that include service, social and spiritual opportunities. YAAC is also committed to bringing community awareness of Young Adults and looks to help Archdiocese leaders and pastors minister to the needs of the Young Adult community.

YAAC is composed of:

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Heaven Answers Requests and its Music can Open the New You

It Felt Its Worth

A moment so powerful we are drawn to our knees. An event so worthy the angels praise so loud we hear their voices. One night in the history of the world so unique, glorious, and divine because the one and only Savior arrived into the human race.

The people of the world had waited for the promised coming of the Messiah, and they waited falling and rising, and falling again in their sins and errors. Chappelle wrote in "Oh Holy Night" that "the soul felt its worth". Can you imagine, resting in the quiet of a seemingly ordinary evening, or drifting off into slumber, when just like that your soul becomes completely aware of its worth. Beyond anything your mind can understand, or your words can explain, your soul KNOWS who and why it is at that moment because the Savior has been born someplace in the world. Your soul feels and is united with His holy presence, and is convinced that despite all your sins, it is divinely worthy because your brother is Jesus.



He came to teach us our worth, that we cannot earn it by any works of our own, and to teach us to live in love and peace. The angel said to the shepherds, "Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." (Luke 2:10-11, NASB) It was indeed good news and filled those in waiting with great joy. In the same way we must wait in joyful hope for Jesus' return, knowing all the while how we are called to live, that we are worthy children of God, and that each Advent season we celebrate a night that was illuminated by the brightest star of all, our Lord.

*Fall on your knees,
Oh hear the angel voices
Oh night divine
Oh night when Christ was born
Oh night divine
Oh night divine*



"Oh Holy Night" was written in 1847 by Placide Chappelle, translated from French to English by John Sullivan Dwight; music by Adolphe Charles Adam.

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Disclaimer: This newsletter is written to serve Catholic Young Adults in the Archdiocese of San Antonio. The opinions expressed in contributed information are the sole opinion of the contributor and does not express the opinions held by the coordinating team or constitute any expressed or implied endorsement from the Archdiocese of San Antonio.