

Roman Catholic Diocese of Nelson

Office of the Vicar General

November 20, 2025

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ,

In the absence of Bishop Gregory, I have been asked to write this Advent letter on his behalf. Lately Bishop Gregory has been improving considerably; and we must continue to pray for his speedy and complete recovery. The Holy Seasons of Advent and Christmas are seasons of graces and blessings from God.

When one thinks of the season of Advent, it is always helpful to remember the words of Jesus "For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life." (John 3.16) At Christmas what we are celebrating is God's love for us in the person of Jesus, who humbled Himself to become one like us in all things but sin. Great saints have taught us that He became like us so that we can become like Him. What is so beautiful about this love God has for us is that it began long before we were born, long before we came into existence. Billions of years ago in fact!

In His letter to the Ephesians St. Paul says, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ..." (Ephesians 1.3-5a) Just imagine, how precious we are in the eyes of God! He thought of you and me as his own beloved in his sight. Pope Benedict XVI captures this truth beautifully in his homily during the Mass of his Inauguration. He said that each one of us is the result of a THOUGHT by God. Each one of us is WILLED, each one of us is LOVED, each one of us is NECESSARY (emphasis added).

So, in a sense, one can say that Advent is a time to reflect on God's unfathomable love for every one of us. Just think of the dignity He has endowed to everyone who believes in Jesus and lives in Him. God thought about us before the earth came to be; He created us in His own image and likeness; He sent His only Son to save us from our slavery to sin and death. No wonder Pope Leo the Great said "Christian, remember your dignity!" In short, this God given dignity is yours and mine if we are true disciples of Jesus Christ: believing and living in Him, walking in the light of Faith, sustained by the graces that He gives us through the Sacraments.

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Now where does this journey of faith take us? Both St. Paul and St. John give us clear answers to this question. In his letter to the Ephesians St. Paul says "So then you are no longer strangers or aliens, but you are citizens with the saints and also members of the household of God." (Ephesians 2.19) Moreover, St. John in his first letter says this: "See what love the father has given us, that we should be called children of God..... Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not been revealed. But what we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is." (1 John 3. 1a-2)

Dear brothers and sisters, may this coming seasons of Advent and Christmas be for us a time to reflect on our lives, to renew our love for God and our faith in Jesus Christ. Let us ponder on our God given dignity and our final destiny to be citizens of Heaven.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year of 2026!!

God Bless,



Very Rev. Sebastian Puthenpura
Vicar General