Christmas Message from the Executive Director

Dear Parents,

How fast time flies...another year will soon be over! Advent is the season that precedes Christmas and is a time of preparation. As you must have noticed by now, the joy that comes from Christmas is the result of how well we prepare ourselves during Advent.

My dear fathers and mothers, please help each one in the family to prepare well for the arrival of Baby Jesus into your hearts and homes! After Christmas, comes Epiphany and then, another joyous occasion, the arrival of the Vicar of Christ, our beloved Pope Francis!

How should we prepare? Perhaps you can gather your children this weekend in a family get-together around your Belen and brainstorm on ideas. You can start with this suggested list (from the Pastoral letter of CBCP in preparation for the Papal Visit) which can certainly be applicable for Christmas too:

- **Make an act of mercy everyday.** Reach out to a lonely stranger, give advise to confused colleagues, forgive someone who has wronged you. Give food to a hungry beggar, visit those in prison, visit the charity ward of hospitals, the homes for the elderly and orphanages. You can also show mercy with ordinary acts like saying “please”, “thank you” or a kind word of appreciation and refraining from cursing and using hurting words.

- **More access to the Sacrament of Reconciliation.** Let everyone in the family prepare their hearts with a good Confession before Christmas.

- **Fervent participation in the Eucharistic sacrifice and spend more time in Eucharistic adoration.** Did you know that during our Eucharistic Triduum last Nov 19-21, your sons have already started to spend time in front of Our Lord in silent prayer? Please continue this wonderful practice by bringing the family to the Adoration chapel in your area.

- **Reviving personal prayer.**

- **Restoring family prayer and devotion in our homes.**

Christmas is always a time of joy for the family! Let’s not let this Christmas season pass by without making our hearts and the heart of each one in our family, a more loving heart than last year...a heart that can accommodate all the poor around us!

On behalf of ManCom and the whole Southridge family, I would like to wish you and your family a Blessed Christmas and a Happy New Year. May the Holy Family be always in your hearts and in your homes!

Christmas Message
from the Executive Director

Dec. 2014

PARENTS FIRST

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ADVENTure

The word ADVENTURE naturally brings to our minds the great feats by people like Christopher Columbus, Magellan, the Wright Brothers, Lance Armstrong and other famous people. It also brings to our imagination fictitious characters like Indiana Jones, Lara Croft, and maybe Dora the Explorer. We are also continuously captured by ‘adventure channels’ offered by National Geographic or Discovery that allow us to travel (obviously within the security of our living rooms) with explorers, scientists, architects, engineers and athletes in their adventurous exposé.

Unfortunately, these examples lead us to think that an adventure is only for ‘special individuals’ and requires ‘an exotic or extreme setting’. Thus, we become resigned with admiring ready-made adventures that T.V., cable and fantasy movies bombard us with. Even the simple venture of concocting our own snacks for a T.V. show or movie can be mechanically ‘castaway’ by calling a fast-food home-delivery service or tossing pop-corn into the microwave.

If more and more people are losing their zeal for real life adventures, it may be due to forgetting that man was created for the greatest adventure: going to Heaven! No goal or project in this world can compare to this heavenly horizon that God daily invites us to. We are fortunate that our Faith always offers a dynamic spiritual setting that helps to remind us about the why of our being here. The season of Advent, which we will soon enter, is always a good starting point to engage a new spiritual Adventure!

Advent is often forgotten because of a widespread materialistic and consumerist pre-Christmas mentality. These gradually are redefining the Christmas season and are striving to remove its Christian meaning by commercializing it. Year after year, people slowly forget the true meaning of a sacred season that celebrates the birth of Christ, and the advent of hope bringing man’s salvation. This is why our journey towards a fruitful Christmas must always begin with and pass through Advent.

In his first Advent address, Pope Francis reflects that it is “a new journey of the People of God with Jesus, our Shepherd, who guides us through history toward the fulfillment of the Kingdom of God. Thus, this day has a special appeal. Through it we experience a profound sense of the meaning of history. We rediscover the beauty of all being on a journey: the Church, with her vocation and mission, and the whole of humanity, nations, civilizations, cultures, all on a journey along the paths of time. (Angelus, 01-XII-2013)”

He continues asking about this journey. “But where is this journey headed? Is there a common goal? And what is this goal? The Lord answers us through the prophet Isaiah and says: “At the end of days the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established as the highest mountain and raised above the hills. All nations shall stream toward it; many peoples shall come and say: ‘Come, let us climb the Lord’s mountain, to the house of the God of Jacob, that he may instruct us in his ways, and we may walk in his paths’” (Isaiah 2:2-3). (Ibid.)”
This must be our daily ADVENTure! And Heaven is the end of our journey here on earth. Like any journey we must prepare for it, launch ourselves into it and help others to travel it. Thus, the Holy Father adds, “This journey is never finished. Just as in the life of each one of us there is always a need to start again, to get back up, to rediscover the meaning of our existence, so for the great human family it is necessary always to redirect ourselves toward the common horizon that is the goal of our journey. It is the horizon of hope! This is the horizon of a good journey. The season of Advent that today we begin once again, restores the horizon of hope for us, a hope that does not disappoint because it is founded on the Word of God. It is a hope that does not disappoint simply because the Lord never disappoints! He is faithful! He does not disappoint! (Ibid.)”

How then must travel towards Christmas along the path of Advent? As in every trip one will need a map, provisions and companions.

An ADVENT MAP consists of prayerfully preparing our minds and hearts by following the course set by the Gospel narrations about our Lord’s birth. One may spend specific days during Advent’s four weeks to reading different Gospel passages narrating our Lady’s Annunciation, the calling of St. Joseph, the shepherds and the angels, etc.

Imagining and meditating on the Gospel scenes will help us not only to re-live them but also revive childlike sentiments that will allow us to travel towards Christmas with greater inner simplicity and earthly detachment. These are concretized if we allow the Evangelical ambience of the season to help us live the lessons of poverty, detachment, trust, patience and sacrifice. And these ideals can be even further concretize by setting up and daily contemplating our home-made crèches (Belen).

With the Advent map on hand, we then prepare the PROVISIONS that come in the form of penitential acts and the Sacraments. We fondly call these penitential acts as ‘Advent offerings’. It comes in the form of little sacrifices in food, drink, leisure and rest. It is also expressed through corporal works of mercy such as almsgiving, visiting the sick, comforting the lonely, etc.

One of the most beautiful Advent provisions would be to prepare oneself for a good confession. This is one spiritual travelling kit that makes our journey more meaningful and fruitful. In fact, Advent contains another inner journey that genuinely helps us to embrace our Lord this Christmas: the journey and adventure of our personal conversion.

Finally, Advent COMAPANIONs! No trip is fun without someone to accompany us. May we not travel the road of Advent alone, let us bring others along the same road and help them to live the Advent spirit in preparation for Christmas. We may first consider our own families, then the persons we work for or with, the people we randomly bump into in the office, malls or streets. May we never be indifferent to offer up prayers, acts of service and even a simple smile for everyone. We can never tell how far such graces can go, and how they can truly help in leading and attracting others to travel the same path towards the Light of Bethlehem. — Fr. Francis B. Ongkingco, School Chaplain
FORMATIVE ACTIVITIES FOR FATHERS AT SOUTHRIDGE SCHOOL

**HOLY MASS**
- Daily 12 noon Mass at the Chapel of the Holy Family.

**RECOLLECTIONS**
- 1st and 4th Sunday Recollection for Fathers (Holy Mass for the Families at 11 am)
- 3rd Thursday Recollection (with Benediction) at Molave Study Center

**BASIC CATHOLIC DOCTRINE CLASSES**
- Every Saturday, 10:15 – 11:00 am at the Academic Office Conference Room, 2nd floor Main Building (for fathers)
- Every 4th Sunday, 8:30—9:10 am (for Afternoon School fathers)
- Every 4th Sunday, 9:15 - 10:45 am (for Afternoon School mothers)

**SPIRITUAL DIRECTION WITH SCHOOL CHAPLAIN**
- By appointment

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FORMATIVE ACTIVITIES FOR MOTHERS AT WOODROSE SCHOOL

**THEOLOGY CLASS** - every 1st and 2nd Thurs, 9 to 10 am, Function Room
**RECOLLECTION** - every 3rd Thursday, 9:15 - 11:00 a.m. & every 4th Thursday, 4:30 - 6:30 p.m.
**CONFESSION** - Monday to Friday except Wednesday, 9 am - 12 noon

**RETREAT SCHEDULES FOR FATHERS**
- Dec. 1-3 (Mon-Wed) Makiling (West Wing)
- Dec. 4-7 (Thurs-Sun) Makiling (West Wing)
- Dec. 11-14 (Thurs-Sun) Makiling (Main)
- Dec. 11-14 (Thurs-Sun) Makiling (West Wing)

For reservations and inquiries, please contact Ms. Leila Lerios of the Philippine Foundation at 817-2318 local 201 or 0928-5063688 or email philfoundation@pldtdsl.net.

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INCENTIVES OF PITCH TURF-FECT PROJECT

**Per Person/Student Incentive**
1. For every 10 raffle tickets sold, the seller gets an incentive ticket. The seller can sell the incentive ticket and get P1,000.
2. The seller gets a gift certificate worth P1,000 for every 50 tickets sold. The gift certificates can either be food/restaurant, NIKE or a sponsor of the raffle.
3. The seller gets a sponsorship for his son from the Socceroo Football Club or Habagat Baseball Club for every 500 tickets sold.
4. Top 3 sellers of at least 1,200 tickets each will get either a trip to Barcelona to watch a FC Barcelona soccer game or watch a major baseball league abroad. The winner can opt to convert the incentive into cash.
5. A seller who will be able to sell 100 tickets by January 5, 2015 will get a gift certificate worth P3,000 in addition to the P2,000 gift certificate (based on incentive #2).

**Per Class Raffle Incentive**
1. For every class ticket sales of P300,000, the class gets P5,000 which they can use for their class party.
2. For every class ticket sales of P600,000, the class gets another P5,000.

The Parents Formation Office welcomes personal write-ups about parenting principles and experiences. Please email them to mrinawat@southridge.ph