



 **SHE WELCOMED
HIM INTO
HER HOME**

Family booklet + calendar
Advent / Christmas 2022





Dear families,

As I write, I imagine you gathered in prayer with this booklet and, day after day until Christmas, ready to open the calendar window.

I sincerely hope that this Season of Advent will be an opportunity for a shared journey, in which adults and children can train themselves to listen attentively, cordially and communally to the Word of God. In our homes may you experience that communion to which Pope Francis and the synodal journey in place in the Church continually invite us.

I am aware that our rhythms of life are often hectic and it is not always possible to find relaxed time to stop together to pray. My wish is that, in small steps, everyone, from the youngest to the oldest, can rediscover the wonder of mutual acceptance and regenerated family relationships. And may your home become a “manger” for our God who comes into the world to be our teacher of hospitality and love.

Happy Advent,
+ Vescovo Francesco

The title of the Advent journey "She welcomed him into her home" is inspired by the first verses of the Gospel passage of Luke that tells of Jesus' welcome into the house of Bethany and that is accompanying us as an evangelical icon in this pastoral year (Luke 10:38-42). Jesus is on his way; he enters the village of Bethany in search of a home and friendly faces and immediately a woman welcomes him. It is this same **style of hospitality** that we wish to train **through family prayer** and the example of those characters we will meet in the festive Gospels.

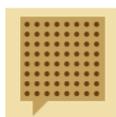
The weekly rhythm of prayer for adults and children will be marked by seven icons, one for each different mode of prayer, starting on Sunday:



The **CANDLE**: to gather in **prayer around the Gospel** on Sunday,



The **LETTER**: to train ourselves in **frequenting the Word** on Mondays,



COMICS: to listen to the **voices of brothers** in the faith on Tuesdays,



The **MEGAPHONE**: to echo us **with good words** on Wednesdays,



The **DISH**: to **bless the table** and the family on Thursdays,



THE CHARACTER: to **pray through art** on Fridays,



The **SCISSOR** to make a **gesture together with the children** on Saturday.

Every day we will be invited to **open a window of the calendar**, not only as a sign of approaching Christmas, but also as an additional instrument of prayer.



In continuity with the theme of HOSTING, the **project of charitable attention** for the Advent Season aims to support the **"Dormitorio Galgario" service of Caritas Diocesana Bergamasca** in the manner of a collection of basic necessities and some proposals to raise awareness for communities on the theme of poverty.

To know all the details
and be able to contribute,
frame the QR-CODE.



1 a

FIRST WEEK



Hosting...

THE LIGHT

Sign of the cross

From the Gospel according to Matthew (24, 42-44)

Therefore, stay awake! For you do not know on which day your Lord will come. Be sure of this: if the master of the house had known the hour of night when the thief was coming, he would have stayed awake and not let his house be broken into. So too, you also must be prepared, for at an hour you do not expect, the Son of Man will come.

Open the calendar window to discover the chorus of the responsorial prayer to pray together and directions to follow with children.

Thank you for this time you give us:
We are waiting for you. **Rit.**

Give us your light so that we can meet
you. **Rit.**

Help us to make this Advent journey
together which begins today. **Rit.**



The image that inaugurates the Advent journey is a detail taken from the painting "**The prophet Elijah ascending to heaven on a chariot of fire**", an episode narrated in the second Book of Kings. It is the work of Antonio Cifrondi (Clusone, 1656 - Brescia, 1730) and is preserved in the church of San Giovanni Battista in Stezzano.

let's pray



Sign of the cross

Let us listen to the first reading proclaimed yesterday at Holy Mass.

From the book of the prophet Isaiah (2, 1-5)

Message that Isaiah, son of Amoz, received in vision of Judah and Jerusalem: "Come, let us go up to 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. They shall beat their swords into ploughshares and their spears into pruning hooks; One nation shall not raise the sword against another, nor shall they train for war again. House of Jacob, come, let us walk in the light of the Lord".

Let us leave a few moments of silence so that we can think back on the Word heard and share aloud that word that has particularly "enlightened" us.

Let us then open the calendar window to discover the refrain of the responsorial prayer and pray together.

You ask us to get back on the road, give us Your strength. **Rit.**

Help us to overcome laziness and the excuse of not having time for You. **Rit.**

Sometimes we feel alone and lost: nothing ever separates us from You. **Rit.**

let's listen



Sign of the cross

Today we allow ourselves to be accompanied by the words of the commentary written by Don Luca Della Giovanna, priest of our Diocese, to the passage of the prophet Isaiah heard yesterday.

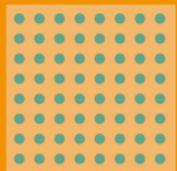
It seems that the prophet Isaiah lived in Jerusalem between the eighth and seventh centuries BC, at a time when the people of Israel were going through a period of great tensions and, above all, were threatened by the Assyrians. Israel, a small territory among the great of the earth, began to perceive its end in the air, deluding itself to defend its borders militarily. They will be truly terrible years: war, hunger, death... they will devastate God's people for a long time. The prophet Isaiah is called by God to look forward to see, first of all, the light at the end of the tunnel. The invitation to "go up the mountain" (where the temple stood) expresses the desire to come out of the darkness and head towards heaven, towards the light. All peoples gathered together will be like a great beacon of light to illuminate a new world, a new history of covenant.

We open the calendar window to let ourselves be provoked by the question proposed.

Let us leave a few moments of silence and share aloud that word of the comment that particularly struck us.

Let us conclude by taking each other by the hand and reciting together the prayer of the Our Father.

we meditate





Sign of the cross

Let's read together the testimony of Marian, a Ukrainian woman forced by the war to flee her country of origin.

I am Marian, I am Ukrainian and with my children, I was forced to flee my country because the war terrified me and it had come too close to my home. My husband stayed in Ukraine to defend our land: I am very worried about him. If the first days after running away, I was very angry, then sadness began to prevail in me: "why do men hate each other?", I asked myself. Now, to tell the truth, I am a little more serene, a small light is making the darkness more bearable: I have found many good, welcoming and generous people, who do not judge me, but who only want me and my children to be well and that the war ends. If we were all really better, if we learned to love each other a little more, to be less selfish, I'm sure that everything would really be more beautiful and there would be no more wars. This is the greatest hope I have in my heart.

Open the calendar window to discover today's prayer intention.

We share aloud the name of a person or a situation that is particularly close to our hearts.

Then we take each other by the hand and recite together the prayer of the Our Father.

we entrust



Sign of the cross

Open the calendar window and make the gesture that is suggested.

Standing around the table, We take each other by the hand and one prays for all with the following words.

We thank you Lord for the gift of this food prepared with care and love:

may it sustain us on our journey in this time of waiting for your coming, so that we can recognize you and meet you in everyday life.

You who are the light of the world, illuminate our path.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

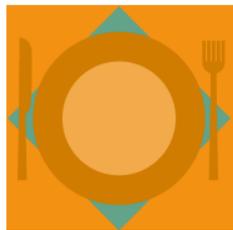
Amen.

If there are children, parents make a sign of the cross on their foreheads.

Let us conclude with the prayer of the Our Father.

The candle remains lit throughout the meal.

we bless



Sign of the cross

Let us allow ourselves to be provoked by the face and posture of the prophet Elijah depicted in the image that inaugurates this journey of Advent, so that we may learn to welcome the light of the Lord into our lives.

Advent is the time of hands stretched out to heaven in the desire to drink from the light; the time of the heart that lives in an anxious expectation as to prevent sleep and to sustain hours and hours of nocturnal wakefulness, sustained by the hope of the encounter with the promise. It is the time to rekindle in the heart the desire for "true light that enlightens every man" (John 1:9), which pierces the darkness of fear and violence. It is the time of arms raised to heaven, as one who prays, who invokes, who offers. Like those who still respond today to the prophet's invitation: "Come, let us walk in the light of the Lord".

Open the calendar window to discover the refrain of the responsorial prayer and pray together with arms raised to heaven.

Lord, sustain us in times of difficulty. **Rit.**

Lord, open us to listening and helping those who are struggling. **Rit.**

Lord, come and live in our family. **Rit.**

we observe



Sign of the cross

We ask the children present to read the following.

In the Gospel a man, in the night, awaits the light. Advent is the time when we await the coming of Jesus, who is the light of the world. This week, the candle has been the symbol of the light we are all waiting for, of Jesus that we are called to host in our home.

Let us take each other by the hand and recite the Our Father together.

Let us open the calendar window and discover what we are called to do, so as not to lose track of the journey.

we compose



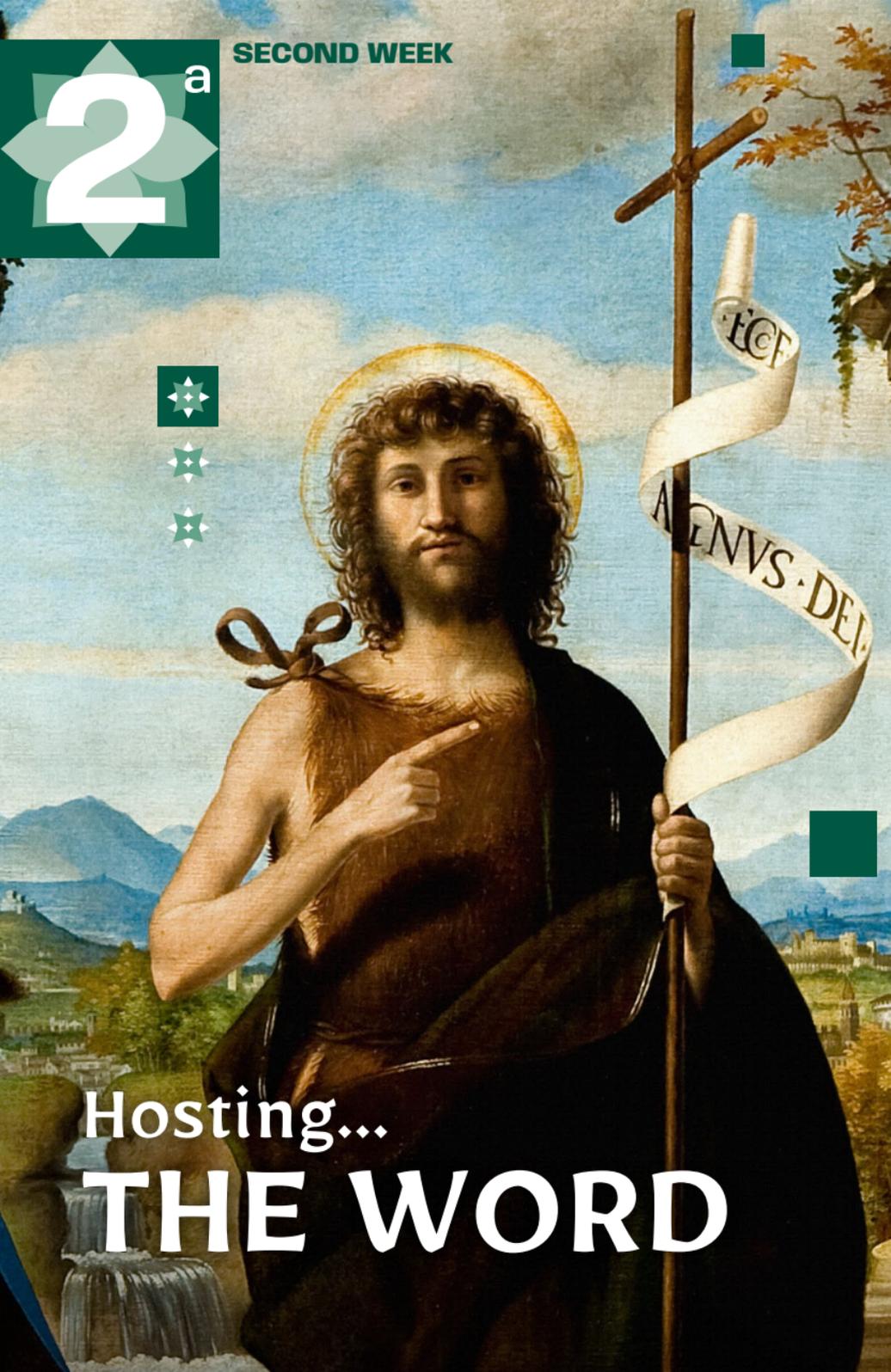
SECOND WEEK

2^a



Hosting...

THE WORD



Sign of the cross

From the Gospel according to Matthew (3, 1-6)

In those days John the Baptist appeared, preaching in the desert of Judea saying: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" It was of him that the prophet Isaiah had spoken when he said: "A voice of one crying out in the desert, 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.'" John wore clothing made of camel's hair and had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey. At that time Jerusalem, all Judea, and the whole region around the Jordan were going out to him and were being baptized by him in the Jordan River as they acknowledged their sins.

Open the calendar window to discover the chorus of the responsorial prayer to pray together and directions to follow with children.

Thank you for the gift of Your Word, with which you illuminate our lives. **Rit.**

Your Word is true and powerful, help us to welcome it. **Rit.**

May Your Word produce in our hearts, fruits of justice and peace. **Rit.**



The canvas is signed and dated on the tag applied to the pedestal on which rests the Baptist, on which is written "Andrea Previtali painted in 1515". The painting "St. John the Baptist among Saints Nicholas of Bari, Bartholomew, Joseph and James Archdeacon" is kept in the church of Santo Spirito in Bergamo.

let's pray



Sign of the cross

Let us listen to the first reading proclaimed yesterday at Holy Mass.

From the book of the prophet Isaiah (11, 1-10)

On that day, a shoot will sprout from the trunk of Jesse, a shoot will sprout from its roots. Upon him will rest the spirit of the Lord, the spirit of wisdom and intelligence, the spirit of counsel and fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and fear of the Lord. On that day it will happen that the root of Jesse will be raised as a banner for the peoples. The nations will look forward to it. His home will be glorious.

Let us leave a few moments of silence so that we can think back on the Word heard and share aloud the word that struck us most.

Let us then open the calendar window to discover the refrain of the responsorial prayer and pray together.

When we cannot distinguish what is good and what is bad. **Rit.**

If we accept it, Your Word changes us, makes us better. **Rit.**

If we follow Your Word, we will find happiness. **Rit.**

let's listen





Sign of the cross

Today we allow ourselves to be accompanied by the words of the commentary written by Don Luca Della Giovanna, priest of our Diocese, to the passage of the prophet Isaiah heard yesterday.

Just as God once chose the young David from among the sons of Jesse to become the new king of Israel, so the prophet Isaiah now exhorts the people not to forget the promise: God is the One who always remains faithful to his word. The expectation of a new Messiah-King is for Israel a desire for continuity but also for rebirth. It is time to keep the Word of the Lord in our hearts in the certainty that, in due time, he will choose a man capable of fully realizing it.

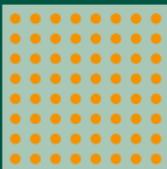
To accept that Word means to "give flesh" to God's promise, to allow the shoot to sprout despite the hearts of men parched by fear and failure. Listening to the Word, combined with fraternal sharing, will be the clear sign of a spiritual rebirth that will enable the people of Israel to face courageously the challenges of their future.

We open the calendar window to let ourselves be provoked by the question proposed.

Let us leave a few moments of silence and share aloud that word of the comment that particularly struck us.

Let us conclude by taking each other by the hand and reciting together the prayer of the Our Father.

we meditate



Sign of the cross

Let us read together the testimony of Natalina, volunteer of the Missionary Group of a parish of our Diocese.

Listening to God is translated and also expressed in listening to the other, welcomed in it's diversity. Listening is the way to overcome antagonism and conflict, to the extent that I consider those in front of me with esteem. I experience these good encounters within the missionary group of young people which, over time, has changed, welcoming the presence of different ages, religions and cultures. Thanks to listening to reality, little by little, the old ways have given way to more inclusive and compelling proposals: children and young people, often excluded from our initiatives or seen with somewhat doubtful looks, have become collaborators of our activities. This journey of listening and welcoming creates bonds, brings so much joy and goodness and helps us to grow better. Shared listening to the Word instills harmony and makes us all more brothers and sisters: it is fundamental to welcome Jesus.

Open the calendar window to discover today's prayer intention.

We share aloud the name of a person we are committed to listening to the most.

Then let us take each other by the hand and recite together the Hail Mary prayer, preparing for tomorrow's Solemnity.

we entrust



Sign of the cross

We open the calendar window and make the gesture that is suggested to us.

Standing around the table, We take each other by the hand and one prays for all with the following words.

We thank you, Lord, for the food you give us and that with love has been prepared for us.

You too, Lord, give us a table, or rather two: the table of Your Word and the table of the Eucharist.

Grant that we too, like Mary, Your mother, whom we remember today as Immaculate, entrust ourselves to Your Word: as Your Word was fulfilled in her, so we too can become instruments of Your love.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

If there are children, parents make a sign of the cross on their foreheads.

Let us conclude with the prayer of the Our Father.



we bless





Sign of the cross

Let us allow ourselves to be provoked by the face and posture of John the Baptist, depicted in the image at the beginning of the week, so that, like him, after welcoming the Word of God, we can become a voice "crying in the desert" of our lives.

To be a voice, only a voice crying in the wilderness. John the Baptist's mission is not easy: to resound in silence. He stands upright and solitary; Behind him, far away, is the city of men. His whole being is condensed in his eyes and in his gesture. He has a magnetic and penetrating gaze. In his eyes lives the hope of the task in the prophecy according to which "every man will see the salvation of God" (Lk 3:1-6). His gesture, peremptory and concise, cannot be misunderstood. The outstretched index finger indicates the inexhaustible source of salvation: the cross of Jesus, on which the scroll is wrapped and on which are imprinted the words of the prophet: "Behold the Lamb of God!".

Let us open the calendar window to discover the refrain of the responsorial prayer and pray together with one voice.

Our life is not always about You, Lord. **Rit.**

Lord, help us to feel present in the voice of the people we meet. **Rit.**

Come, Lord, we are waiting for You. **Rit.**

we observe



Sign of the cross

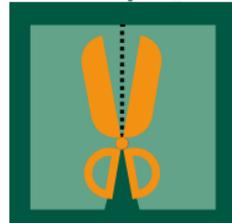
We ask the children present to read the following.

The Gospel tells us of John the Baptist: he first listened to the Word of God and invited everyone to do the same. The Bible is the Word that we too must listen to in order to be able to make ourselves a welcoming home towards Jesus and others.

Let us take each other by the hand and recite the Our Father together.

Let us open the calendar window and discover what we are called to do, so as not to lose track of the journey.

we compose



THIRD WEEK

3^a

Hosting...

QUESTIONS



Sign of the cross

From the Gospel according to Matthew (11, 2-6)

At that time, John, who was in prison, having heard of the works of Christ, sent his disciples to ask him: "Are you the one who must come, or must we wait for another?" Jesus answered them: "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind regain their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are purified, the deaf hear, the dead rise, the Gospel is proclaimed to the poor. And blessed is he who finds no cause for scandal in me!"

Open the calendar window to discover the chorus of the responsorial prayer to pray together and directions to follow with children.

We are living in difficult times, Lord, help us! **Rit.**

Having faith today is not easy, Lord keep us united. **Rit.**

We have many questions, Lord, answer us. **Rit.**



The fresco "**The Preaching of St. John the Baptist**" was painted in 1733 by Giovan Battista Tiepolo (Venice, 1696 - Madrid, 1770) to decorate the renovated dome of the Colleoni Chapel. The painting is part of a cycle that narrates the Stories of John the Baptist, patron saint of the Chapel since its consecration, which took place in 1475, when Bartolomeo Colleoni was still alive.

let's pray



Sign of the cross

Let us listen to the first reading proclaimed yesterday at Holy Mass.

From the book of the prophet Isaiah (35, 1-5)

The wilderness and the parched land will exult; will rejoice and bloom. Like the crocus it shall bloom abundantly, and rejoice with joyful song. Strengthen hands that are feeble, make firm knees that are weak, say to the fearful of heart: Be strong, do not fear! Here is your God, he comes with vindication; With divine recompense he comes to save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall see, and the ears of the deaf be opened.

Let us leave a few moments of silence so that we can think back to the Word heard and share aloud a question that was born in us.

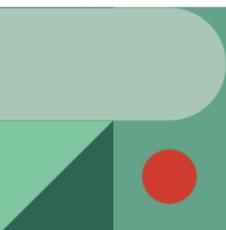
Let us then open the calendar window to discover the refrain of the responsorial prayer and pray together.

When life flows through our hands, taken by a thousand commitments. **Rit.**

When we are faced with important choices. **Rit.**

When we don't know which way to go. **Rit.**

let's listen



Sign of the cross

We allow ourselves to be accompanied by the words of commentary written by Don Luca Della Giovanna, priest of our Diocese, to the passage of the prophet Isaiah heard yesterday.

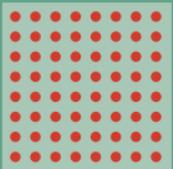
In a short time even, a big city can become a desert! And even the most luxuriant land can become very arid if the rain does not arrive for a few months. The image of the prophet Isaiah is evocative of the state of mind of the people subjected to exile. Yet the desert is not the end, indeed, for those who believe, it is only the beginning. The wonder you feel in seeing a single bud bloom in the desert is priceless. Even the human heart can sometimes find itself in a sort of existential desert: it is there that life's crudest questions come. The perception of nothingness of oneself is a condition for embarking on a new path. It is the right time to "roll up your sleeves" in the certainty that where there is an end, there is also a new beginning. Israel will redeem itself by taking deep questions seriously, allowing God's Word to bathe its soul and perform unexpected wonders.

We open the calendar window to let ourselves be provoked by the question proposed.

Let us leave a few moments of silence and share aloud that word of the comment that particularly struck us.

Let us conclude by taking each other by the hand and reciting together the prayer of the Our Father.

we meditate



Sign of the cross

Let's read together the testimony of Antonio, coordinator of the Scarpellini Family Counseling Center in Bergamo.

The question has always been the first step to achieve salvation. Those who ask the question have already made several more or less conscious steps within themselves: recognizing their limitations, accepting that help comes from outside themselves and deciding to rely on someone else. In fact, the person is already on the way to good. But the question, which is a typically human movement, must meet with welcoming, which is instead a purely divine movement. The newness of the Gospel leads us to grasp that the salvation offered by God precedes the question. Jesus does not wait to be recognized to die on the cross, the merciful father does not wait for the repentance of his son to run to meet him. Salvation precedes the request because love does not need to be deserved.

Open the calendar window to discover today's prayer intention.

We share aloud a question that, as a family, we wish to entrust to God.

Let us conclude by taking each other by the hand and reciting together the prayer of the Our Father.

we entrust





Sign of the cross

Open the calendar window and make the gesture that is suggested.

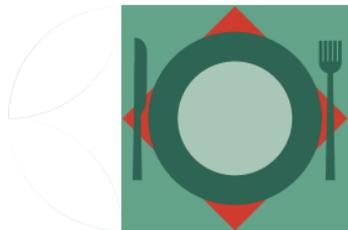
Standing around the table, we take each other by the hand and one prays for all with the following words.

Thank you Lord for the food
that even today you give us.
We know many in the world
they do not have what it takes to feed themselves.
The tragedy is that we have become accustomed to this
tragedy
and we don't even ask ourselves any more questions.
As to Peter, also to us today first of all
ask a question: "Do you love me?",
followed by your invitation: "Follow me".
Make us, Lord, Your answer to the question of love
that the poor raise You in prayer.
In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
Amen

If there are children, parents make a sign of the cross on their foreheads.

Let us conclude with the prayer of the Our Father.

we bless



Sign of the cross

Let us allow ourselves to be provoked by the faces of the three characters depicted in this week's image. They are displaced but their gazes are turned upwards, as if to teach us a posture of trust, the only one to welcome God into our life.

Dazed, absorbed, perhaps displaced. The faces of those who hear the prophet's voice betray an intimate reaction. The words of the Baptist do not leave us indifferent. Instead, they generate profound questions that bounce in the heart of those who give them attention. An elderly man attends the sermon kidnapped. His eyes reveal his inner disposition, all tense in listening. It is as if an insistent echo of a single question is heard: "And us, what should we do?" (Luke 3, 10). But not even the prophet is spared the burden of interior research and questioning. "Are you the one who has to come or do we have to wait for another?" he is not afraid to ask Jesus. He lets himself be crossed by the question, recognizing that the following is born from it.

We open the window of the calendar to discover the refrain of the responsorial prayer and pray together with our eyes turned upwards.

Lord, here are my hands: let them bring gifts to those who are hungry. **Rit.**

Lord, here are my feet: they reach those who feel alone. **Rit.**

Lord, here is my heart: bring your love to every brother. **Rit.**

we observe



Sign of the cross

We ask the children present to read the following.

The Gospel reminds us that sometimes questions arise in people: we must not be afraid of them! The question mark reminds us that we need to leave room for these questions, even if we don't always have the answers.

Let us take each other by the hand and recite the Our Father together.

Let us open the calendar window and discover what we are called to do, so as not to lose track of the journey.

we compose



4^a

FOURTH WEEK



Hosting...
DREAMS





Sign of the cross

From the Gospel according to Matthew (1, 20-24)

But while [Joseph] was considering these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said to him, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary your bride with you. In fact the child that is generated in her comes from the Holy Spirit; she will give birth to a son and you will call him Jesus: in fact he will save his people from their sins”. All this took place so that what was said by the Lord through the prophet would be fulfilled: Behold, the virgin will conceive and give birth to a son: he will be given the name of Emmanuel, which means God with us. When he awoke from sleep, Joseph did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him and took his bride with him.

Open the calendar window to discover the chorus of the responsorial prayer to pray together and directions to follow with children.

Joseph is a man in love: he loves as he loves God. **Rit.**

Joseph is a just man: he sees what God sees. **Rit.**

Joseph is a man of faith: he dreams of what God dreams. **Rit.**

The Saint Joseph is one of the 4 saints that Lorenzo Lotto (Venice, c. 1480 - Loreto, 1557) painted in 1521 at the foot of the throne of Mary for the church of San Bernardino in Bergamo. Together with him are depicted San Giovanni Battista, Sant'Antonio Abate and San Bernardino, respectively patrons of the neighborhood, the village and the church.

let's pray



Sign of the cross

Let us listen to the first reading proclaimed yesterday at Holy Mass.

From the book of the prophet Isaiah (7, 10-14)

In those days, the Lord spoke to Ahaz: "Ask for yourself a sign from the Lord, your God, from the depths of hell or from above." But Ahaz replied, "I won't ask, I don't want to tempt the Lord." Then Isaiah said, "Listen, house of David! Is it not enough for you to tire men, why now you also want to tire my God? Therefore the Lord Himself will give you a sign. Behold: the virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, whom she will call Emmanuel ».

Let us leave a few moments of silence so that we can think back to the Word heard and share aloud a sign of the presence of God that we have seen in our life.

Let us then open the calendar window to discover the refrain of the responsorial prayer and pray together.

When life upsets us with unexpected events.

Rit.

When we struggle to put your Word into practice. **Rit.**

When our heart is closed to Your dream about us. **Rit.**

let's listen



Sign of the cross

We allow ourselves to be accompanied by the words of commentary written by Don Luca Della Giovanna, priest of our Diocese, to the passage of the prophet Isaiah heard yesterday.

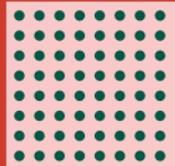
In addition to the Assyrian Empire stationed with its troops on the borders, Ahaz (king of Judah) is also threatened by the kings of Aram and Israel. His heart is agitated with fear and despair because he fears that his kingdom will have no future. It is God himself who provokes his soul submerged in anguish so that he can cultivate a great dream about his people. However, Ahaz does not want to know, on the contrary, he closes himself more and more in his nightmares. At this point the word of hope returns to the prophet Isaiah, who announces the birth of a "special son". This son will be an unexpected gift for everyone, it will be the fulfillment of God's dream for humanity, an unequivocal sign of his presence among the people. He will be called "Emmanu-El" which in Hebrew means "God-with-us". It is God's choice to dream big without losing sight of the concrete reality of men, as the life of Jesus will be.

We open the calendar window to let ourselves be provoked by the question proposed.

Let's leave a few moments of silence and share aloud the emotion we felt in hearing that God dreams big for us too.

We conclude by taking each other by the hand and reciting the Our Father prayer together.

we meditate



Sign of the cross

Let's read together the testimony of Michele, municipal councilor in Scanzorosciate.

I am lying down, with my eyes turned to the sky, and who tells me that if it is day you cannot see the stars, and if it is night the sun cannot shine inside me? I put my head free from all thoughts in the lap of the sand on a summer beach, or on a mountain rock with a welcoming shape shaped by the water of a stream. Here I am in front of the materialization of the thought of the dream that made home. This for me is the meaning of hosting dreams. The star has fallen, the hand is held tightly by those by your side. I believe in the dream of being close to the highest form of charity, Politics. I am completely immersed in the belief, that yes, it is true, I was taught, but that one day I make it so noble that I make it home. Host within you, boy, the dream of Life.

Let's open the calendar window to find out today's prayer intention.

We share aloud a great dream that we wish to cherish for the future.

We conclude by taking each other by the hand and reciting the Our Father prayer together.

we entrust





Sign of the cross

Open the calendar window and make the gesture that is suggested.

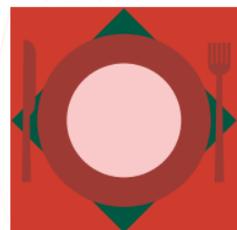
Standing around the table, we take each other by the hand and one prays for all with the following words.

Thank you Lord for this table set,
that makes us grasp your unique way of giving you a gift:
through the hands of those who love us.
When we live in difficult moments,
the temptation is to ask you for a sign, for help.
To Joseph, a righteous man who dreamed of what You dream,
instead you asked him to become a sign for you.
Help us to enlarge our heart
to become signs of your love,
in this house, in our community, wherever we go.
In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

If there are children, parents make a sign of the cross on their foreheads.

Let us conclude with the prayer of the Our Father.

we bless



Sign of the cross

Let us allow ourselves to be provoked by the elderly face of Saint Joseph, character of the week, who agreed to turn his life upside down to make himself the home of God's dream for humanity..

It was not easy for Joseph to understand God's will, even though he was a just man and had full confidence in the Most High. He is absorbed, as if he is focusing on something vague, something like a dream. Maybe he wasn't a man who paid too much attention to dreams. He was a concrete and humble man, with his feet firmly planted on the ground - so he seems to say with the gesture of lifting his brown cloak to show them. He was a carpenter, one who did not spare himself in his work - perhaps the sleeve of his jacket came unstitched while he was toiling in the shop. Yet, he hosts the Lord's will in the dream and welcomes it. Joseph hosts God's "dream" of being Emmanuel, the "God with us". Not without effort. His eyes seem to search for an explanation for what is happening to him.

Let's open the calendar window to discover the refrain of responsorial prayer and pray together, closing our eyes and joining our hands.

Not everything is going the way we would like. **Rit.**

We have dreams, which we would like to cultivate. **Rit.**

Make our hearts alert to Your dreams for our happiness. **Rit.**

we observe



Sign of the cross

We ask the children present to read the following.

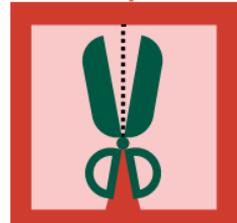
At the center of attention is the star that becomes the sign of our dreams and of God. Tonight it will guide us towards the baby God wrapped in swaddling clothes and placed in a manger.

God makes His dream known to Joseph in his sleep. The star makes us think of dreams and desires: even God has one on us. It is up to us to know it and let ourselves be guided by God's desire for us.

Let us take each other by the hand and recite the Our Father together.

Let's open the calendar window and find out what we are called to do at the end of Advent.

we compose





To host...
GOD



Sign of the cross

From the Gospel according to Luke (2, 15-20)

As soon as the angels had gone away from them, towards heaven, the shepherds said to each other: "Let us therefore go as far as Bethlehem, let's see this event that the Lord has made known to us". They went without delay and found Mary and Joseph and the baby lying in the manger. And after seeing it, they reported what they had been told about the child. All who heard were amazed at what the shepherds had told them. Mary, for her part, kept all these things, pondering them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as they had been told.

Let's open the calendar window
to discover the brief commentary on the work of art
depicting the Nativity
and directions to follow with children

Let us pray together, saying:

Today the light shines on us.

Today Jesus, the Savior, was born for us. **Rit.**

God made himself like us, so that we can
become like him. **Rit.**

Together with Mary, we keep this great love
in our hearts. **Rit.**

The painting "Nativity of Jesus", preserved at the Santa Maria Assunta Parish Museum in Vertova, is attributed to Giovanni Carobbio (Nembro, 1687 - 1752), a painter born in Nembro and trained in Brescia, who worked in Vertova in the last years of his life, realizing in 1749 two paintings for the church of San Rocco.



Hosting the...
DIFFERENT

Sign of the cross

From the Gospel according to Matthew (2, 1-2.9-12)

Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the time of King Herod, behold, some Magi came from the east to Jerusalem and said: «Where is he who was born, the King of the Jews? We have seen his star rising and we have come to adore him ». [...] After hearing the king, they left. And behold, the star, which they had seen rising, preceded them, until it came and stood over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they felt a great joy. Entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother, they bowed down and worshiped him. Then they opened their caskets and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they returned to their country by another route.

Let us pray together, saying:

We adore you with all the peoples of the earth.

Only those who look up can see the stars that indicate Your presence. **Rit.**

As the Magi did, today and every day, we seek you Lord. **Rit.**

We bring you our little gifts, together with a heart that expands for you. **Rit.**

The painting “Adoration of the Magi with Saints John the Evangelist, Matthew and Anthony of Padua” is kept at the sanctuary of the Madonna della Costa in San Gallo, a hamlet of San Giovanni Bianco. For centuries it was the scenic backdrop of the miraculous parchment preserved in the sanctuary. It is attributed to Pietro Ricchi (Lucca, 1606 - Udine, 1675) a Tuscan artist who between 1641 and 1650 painted many works for the churches of Bergamo.



There is an air of celebration in Bethlehem. Around Mary and Jesus is a whirlwind of faces and colors. The magi have finally reached their goal. They wear the most precious garments that sparkle with flamboyant intensity. Yet it is the naked and helpless body of Jesus that gives light to the whole scene. He is the star that the magi have eagerly sought. Before him they prostrate themselves to offer precious gifts. The oldest makes a gesture of tenderness and adoration: he kisses the foot of the newborn. He lays down the crown and his gift, so will the other two. They will then return home, their hands empty and their hearts full of light, resuming their journey without needing the star anymore and traveling "another road".

07 January
Saturday

... it is Christmas!

Many Christians in the world, in Italy and in our Diocese celebrate Christmas today.

They are the Christian communities that follow the Julian calendar: among these there are several Orthodox Churches and the Eritrean Catholic community of the Ge'ez rite.

The Ukrainian Catholic community of the Greek-Catholic rite in Italy has been celebrating, together with the majority, on December 25th since 2021. But in the traditions and in the families of origin, the Christmas party is also, again, on January 7th.

We therefore invite you not to extinguish the Christmas spirit and the exchange of good wishes on January 6, but to "leave the lights on": in Bergamo there are many people who celebrate on this very day!

Let us pray for and with them!



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Giovanni Carobbio, Nativity of Jesus,
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