

# Blessing of Advent wreath

written by Arkansas Catholic Staff |



With the beginning of Advent Dec. 1, we begin preparations for the Christmas season. Having an Advent wreath in your home is one way to observe the liturgical season.

The blessing of an Advent wreath can be done at home in families. The text below is taken from "Catholic Household Blessings & Prayers." One family member can lead the prayer while the others say the response:

*All make the sign of the cross as the **leader** says: Our help is in the name of the Lord.*

**Response:** Who made heaven and earth.

*Then the Scripture, Isaiah 9:1-2 and 5-6; or Isaiah 63:16-17 and 19; or Isaiah 64:2-7 is read.*

**Leader:** The word of the Lord.

**Response:** Thanks be to God.

*With hands joined, the leader says:*

Lord our God,

we praise you for your Son, Jesus Christ:

he is Emmanuel, the hope of the peoples,

he is the wisdom that teaches and guides us,

he is the Savior of every nation.

Lord God,

let your blessing come upon us

as we light the candles of this wreath.

May the wreath and its light

be a sign of Christ's promise to bring us salvation.

May he come quickly and not delay.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**Response:** Amen.

*The blessing may conclude with a verse from "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel":*

O come, desire of nations, bind

in one the hearts of humankind;

bid ev'ry sad division cease

and be thyself our Prince of Peace.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel

shall come to thee, O Israel.

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## A prayer for daily work

written by Special to Arkansas Catholic |

"God of all creation, through our daily work you have made us stewards of the earth and co-creators with you. As a skilled carpenter, Joseph worked in Nazareth and taught Jesus the dignity of human work and the nobility of manual labor. Through the example of Joseph, teach me to work productively, skillfully and honestly.

"As I go about my work this day, help me to value the things I do, whether they be big projects or tiring, trivial tasks. Enable me to handle the stresses of my work and to trust in your guiding presence. Show me that my workaday living is my road to holiness. May my Sunday worship blend into my weekday labor so that all that I do each day may give you praise.

“St. Joseph the Worker, pray for me and be my example in everyday work. Amen.”

*Written by Stephen J. Binz, author, biblical scholar and speaker, formerly from Arkansas.*

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## **How to create a more prayerful life this Lenten season**

written by Katie Zakrzewski |



Lent is a time of reflection to deepen one’s faith and join Christ on the journey to the cross.

While some Catholics may be looking to give up sweets and sodas, other Catholics may be looking to do something more, such as creating a more prayerful life.

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## **Adoration visit pushes Marinoni to become evangelist**

written by Special to Arkansas Catholic |



Paula Marinoni is a real estate agent by day and an evangelist by night.

Over the past 13 years, the lifelong member of St. Joseph Parish in Fayetteville has distributed tens of thousands of prayer cards to the Arkansas Catholic Charismatic Conference and parishes around the diocese at no cost.

Marinoni became inspired to begin the ministry during an experience in the adoration chapel in 2010.

“I was crying because a very close friend of the family was dying and you know, in that moment, you just feel helpless,” she said. “And this one, lovely woman walked over to me in adoration and hugged me and handed me a pamphlet that was a Divine Mercy Chaplet for the sick and dying.”

Although Marinoni was unfamiliar with the Divine Mercy Chaplet at the time, the pamphlet explained what it was and how to pray it, and this had a profound impact on her.

“From then on, I didn't feel helpless,” Marinoni said. “I felt like I was given the way to connect with this. That's all she had to do was walk over and hand it to me. And from then on, I thought that I could do something for other people. So I started ordering little prayer cards on how to say the rosary, and I started putting them out. Whenever I would get some extra money, I would order more cards and sneak them out. But nobody knew where they were coming from.”

From then on, Marinoni felt a calling to do more. She contacted her aunt, Mother Virginia Marie, a Carmelite nun in La Plata, Md., and the two collaborated to create a St. Michael the Archangel prayer card as they had done several times in the past. Marinoni printed the prayer cards and pamphlets about the rosary, and she kept her parish stocked with them in order to help and encourage people through the pamphlets.

When she saw the demand for the prayer cards and pamphlets, Marinoni knew she could do more. She ordered thousands of copies, both in English and Spanish, to hand out for Divine Mercy Sunday.

As more and more people began using them, Marinoni wanted to expand the types of prayer cards she was putting out to include the St. Gertrude prayer.

“The St. Gertrude prayer was a hard one to find the right version of and the right explanation of why you say it,” she said. “Jesus promised St. Gertrude that a thousand souls would be released from purgatory every time it was said, and that's an incredible thing.”

Marinoni reached out to her Carmelite aunt in late 2020 to see if she could use the monastery's printer to print 15,000 St. Gertrude prayer cards.

“So I ordered them, they came, and I said, ‘Lord, this is great. This will last me a long time,’” Marinoni said. “And I heard the Lord say to me, ‘That's not enough. Place the order again.’ I'm thinking it's funny because I wouldn't have gone out and ordered 30,000. So I contacted my aunt and I said I want to order another 15,000. And what was also funny is they didn't balk at it at all.”

Marinoni is also helping her aunt's order by providing them with sets of 10 prayer cards to send to everyone who orders from their gift shop website.

Recently, Marinoni collaborated with her aunt once again to print 50,000 St. Michael prayer cards.

“In working with the nuns, I asked for an image of a ‘less threatening St. Michael and a less gross devil,’” she said. “Something that would be comforting, inspiring, inviting and even be an image that a parent could share with a child to learn the prayer and take up the devotion.

“I am offering them to parishes for free with the only stipulations that they are not sold or even an offering asked for and that they not be left on a shelf and forgotten about. If any priests would like to order some for their parish, they can email me, and I will send them at no cost.”

Contact Marinoni at [pm@paulamarinoni.com](mailto:pm@paulamarinoni.com).

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## Quality time with Jesus is the best love language

written by Special to Arkansas Catholic |

You may be familiar with something called the “Five Love Languages.” If you aren't, they are:

- Words of affirmation
- Acts of service
- Gifts

- Physical touch
- Quality time

Based on a book by Gary Chapman, these “love languages” are perhaps most commonly applied to romantic relationships. But they can really extend to all relationships: siblings, parents, children, friends, coworkers, etc.

The basic gist is that each of us tends to gravitate toward one of these “languages” as the primary means of how we tend to express our love and also how we tend to receive love from others.

Jesus Christ was perfect, so we could also say he’s the perfect example and embodiment of all five love languages.

Jesus Christ was perfect, so we could also say he’s the perfect example and embodiment of all five love languages. He spoke words of affirmation to the suffering. He made acts of service to the poor and the needy. He gifted wine at Cana, and his very self on the cross. He touched the eyes of the blind, the ears of the deaf, the lips of the mute. And he spent incalculable quality time in prayer with his Heavenly Father.

Scripture tells us Jesus routinely went off alone or into the wilderness to pray. His quality time with the Father was often tied to a specific purpose. But “purposeful prayer” doesn’t necessarily equate to “productive prayer.”

In our American culture, we focus so much on utility and productivity — which can be great for the economy and our physical livelihood — but not so much for our spiritual lives. At its core, prayer really is just “wasting time with God.” Our prayer time might have a specific purpose. But we should never obsess over whether it was particularly “productive.”

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is the perfect medicine to our unhealthy attachment to productivity. Adoration of our Lord in the Eucharist doesn’t have some predesigned goal or agenda. The sole agenda is adoration for adoration’s sake. Adoring the Lord for the sake of adoring the Lord, and seeking nothing in return.

We each have our own preferred ways of showing love to Christ. It could be acts of service to others, words of affirmation through worship music, giving gifts to beautify the church or healing through physical touch.

But how often do we opt for the fifth love language: quality time? How often do we choose to just spend some quality time with Christ? To love him just by being near him?

We’ve all heard of tithing. And most of us understandably equate that with our money. But the most precious resource that any of us have really is our time. We can all work harder to earn more money. But none of us ultimately can do anything to buy more time. Our time is the one thing that’s truly priceless. How we spend our time says a lot about our priorities.

Tithing our time to God may be even more important than tithing our money. Because we’re giving our time back over to him who gave us that time in the first place. We’re saying, “Lord, I know my time on earth here is limited, and I could be doing a lot of other things right now, but for this one hour (or 30 minutes or 10 minutes, or whatever) I’m giving it over to you.”

Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament is a chance to place our own offerings on the altar next to our eucharistic Lord. I might place on that altar my desolations (maybe a family dispute, or mourning a loved one, or difficulties with coworkers). Or I might place there certain consolations (rejoicing in new life, renewal of great friendships, or healing from some pain or injury).

Whatever it may be, adoration is a time to place our very lives on the altar next to the Lord. To let him sit with us, and us with him. To show the Lord how much he is loved, just by spending some quality time with him — and for no other reason than that.

**Deacon Matt Glover, JCL**, is the diocese's chancellor for canonical affairs and serves at Christ the King Church in Little Rock.

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## **I'm learning how to keep my eyes on God**

written by Sarah Beth Thomas |

Young Faith columnist Sarah Beth Thomas is a junior at Mount St. Mary Academy in Little Rock. St. Anne Church in North Little Rock is her home parish.

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## **Knights resurrect Rosary Rally for student-athletes**

written by Special to Arkansas Catholic |



Central Arkansas KOC chapters bring back event last held in 2015

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## Hot Springs knitters cover city's residents with prayers

written by Special to Arkansas Catholic |





Hot Springs knitters bless the sick, grieving, those in prison with prayer shawls

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## **Find the right style for you with top five ways to pray**

written by Aprille Hanson Spivey |

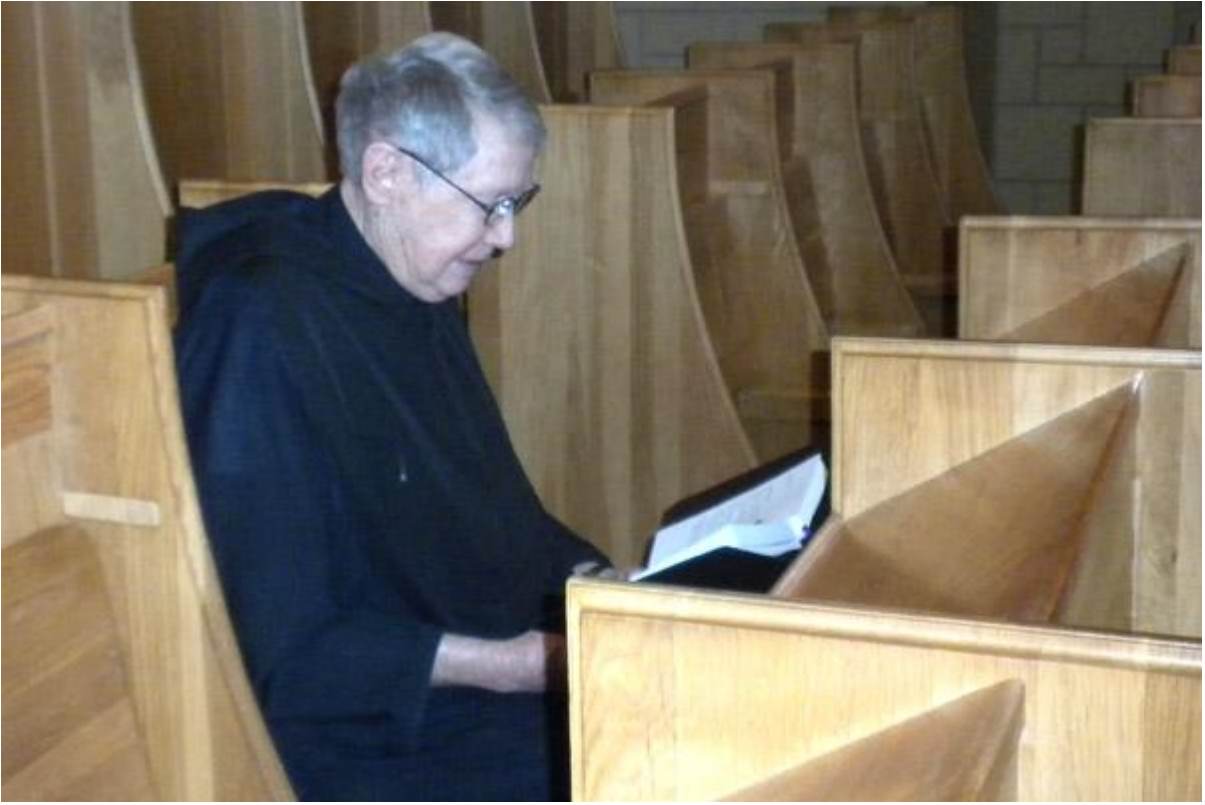


Not sure where to start? Check out the top five ways to pray

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## **Time for prayer: More conversations with God this Lent**

written by Aprille Hanson Spivey |



Don't overthink prayer, which can even be two minutes of silence