**The Say Yes to Holiness Newsletter #91**

Merry Christmas!

Our Savior has come! The angels have been heard singing on high, Mary laid Jesus in the manger, and the shepherds have come and adored. Now, it is our turn to embrace the fullness of all that God has given us in this act of LOVE. For Love has come down from Heaven to be with us.

For Love is WHO God is.

Jesus is the Second Person of the Trinity, the Word made Flesh. But even more than that, He is Love Incarnate.

This is what we are in the process of celebrating through the Christmas *season*--all twelve days and beyond!

So my newsletter this week will strive to help inspire, encourage, and accompnay you during this wondrous season of glad tidings that fills us with all the hope, peace, joy and love that this workd can not give us on our journey towards holiness and our Heavenly homeland...

**Food for the Head**​
​*“If we approach with faith, we too will see Jesus ... for the Eucharistic table takes the place of the crib. Here the Body of the Lord is present, wrapped not in swaddling clothes but in the rays of the Holy Spirit."* — St. John Chrysostom
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Saint John Chrysostom reminds us that Jesus coming at Christmas was in order to help us be able to see Him with the eyes of faith after His time on earth was completed. For through the Holy Spirit, the Body of Christ is forever before us each and every time we come to the Eucharistic table to receive the Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Christ.

This is the knowledge that we need to acquire, the knowledge that helps us be able to have faith and trust in the promises of God. And this knowledge is found most profoundly in God's Word--Sacred Scripture.

It is only when we spend time reading, reflecting, and relating with God about His Word that we can develop the deep faith necessary to see Christ everywhere--from His crib in Bethelem to His Last Supper in Jerusalem to each and every Eucharistic table at every Mass celebrated in every Catholic church around the world.

Do we have that kind of faith? Do we see Jesus not just in the manger wrapped in swaddling clothes, but also wrapped in the rays of the Holy Spirit at the Eucharistic table before us at Mass?

*This week, reflect upon the depth of your faith by asking if you see Jesus as easily in the Eucharistic table as you see Him laying in the manger. If not, spend time with the Word this week and ask Him for an increase in your faith.*

**Food for the Heart**

“T*hursday. When I started the Holy Hour, I wanted to immerse myself in the agony of Jesus in the Garden of Olives. Then I heard a voice in my soul:****Meditate on the mystery of the Incarnation.****And suddenly the Infant Jesus appeared before me, radiant with beauty. He told me how much God is pleased with simplicity in a soul.****Although My greatness is beyond understanding, I commune only with those who are little. I demand of you a childlike spirit."***--Saint Faustina, *Diary of Divine Mercy*, 332.

Here, Saint Faustina shares what Jesus expressed to her as she prepared to meditate upon His Passion, but instead she was directed to meditate upon the Incarnation instead.

And what reason was St Faustina given?

Because "God is pleased with simplicity in a soul" and "communes only with those who are little" and who have a "childlike spirit."

During the Christmas season, it is one of the most difficult times we have in our world to cultivate a spirit of simplicity in our souls because of the focus upon so many things and activities.

Even in the midst of a pandemic, our world still grew increasingly noisy with distractions, discouragement, and division in Advent and continues now during Christmas.

What are you doing to cultivate simplicity within your soul? Are you seeking to cultivate a childlike spirit? A spirit of wonder and awe and joy and trust?

*This week, seek to cultivate a childlike spirit by spending at least 5 minutes each day of the Christmas season reflecting upon the mystery of the Incarnation with wonder and awe and joy and trust.*

**Food for the Hands**

"*A word or a smile is often enough to put fresh life in a despondent soul*." — St. Therese of Lisieux

This Advent and Christmas season have been especially hard this year because of the need to physically distance ourselves from one another, meaning that travel plans have had to be cancelled, and many time-honored family and community traditions have gone by the wayside.

Unfortunately, this has only caused a heightened level of anxiety, stress, loneliness, depression and discouragement for many in our midst.

But St Therese gives us an answer for this crisis--the sharing of a kind word or the sharing of a smile with another.

And how can we do this when we are physically distanced and masked?

By taking the time to check on, and to visit with one another--however we are able. It could be through a phone call or by simply sending a note. Or it could be by dropping off a card and a plate of chocolates. Or perhaps it's by being the person who sets up the Zoom call for family and friends so everyone connects with one another.

It's the littlest things that make all the difference. Don't stop doing the little things.

They matter more than you know.

*This week, reach out to two people whom you have not crossed paths with during the last couple of weeks, and check in by starting a conversation.*

**Food for the Feet**

"*The single desire of the Immaculata is to raise the level of our spiritual life to the summits of holiness."* St Maximilian Kolbe, *Kolbe Writings*, 1220.

Today, we celebrated the Feast of the Holy Family, and this Friday, we celebrate Mary, Mother of God. Mary figures prominently throughout the Christmas season, and for good reason.

Mary gives us a path to draw closer to God and become more like her Son. And when we do these things, we journey ever closer towards holiness.

And this brings Mary great joy. Why?

Because it brings great joy to her Son. Our Lord and Savior, Jesus, is overjoyed when we draw close to His Mother, because He knows that by doing so, the potential for our coming to dwell in our Heavenly home with Him for all eternity exponentially increases!

St Maximilian Kolbe echoes here what St Louis de Montfort had indicated in his writings on Marian consecration three centuries ago, that it is the surest, easiest, and quickest way to draw closer to Jesus and find our way to heaven.

This is why we honor Mary. Because everything she does is in union with God and her Son's desires for us--for us to become holy men and women--to become saints.

*This week, pray the rosary and ask Mary to help you draw closer to her Son during this Christmas season.*

*(A simple way to do this is by listening to the*[*Daily Rosary podcast from the School of Faith*](https://preview.convertkit-mail.com/click/3ohw7n92skh6/aHR0cHM6Ly93d3cuc2Nob29sb2ZmYWl0aC5jb20vZGFpbHktcm9zYXJ5LW1lZGl0YXRpb25z)*)*

**Did You Know?**

“*In daily prayer things often strike us. When we reflect on them, and resolve to act on them, we learn to follow God’s inspirations. This might seem normal, or simply routine. But we never know when the Spirit may be directing us through our prayer to something very important—even to a life-changing experience with Christ. Meditative prayer is one very important way that we can live “in the Spirit.””* —School of Love Daily Reflection

**​Exhortation**

This Christmas season, I am being intentional about celebrating all twelve days of Christmas. It is going to be challenging because the world is already clamoring for us to put away our decorations, turn off the lights, and "get back to work."

But there is no greater work that any of us can do, especially this year in the midst of the pandemic and increasingly uncertain economic times, than for us to strive to BE the light that the world needs.

To be the light of HOPE that keeps shining in the darkness.

To be the light of PEACE that calmly weathers whatever storm comes our way.

To be the light of JOY and wonder and awe in the midst of all of creation.

To be the light of LOVE that stops to help a friend, spends time listening to a neighbor, provides a meal for a person in need, and is willing to share their coat with the person shivering on the street.

To be willing to be the light for a world wrapped in darkness, discouragement and despair.

BE the light for those around you by continuing to do WHATEVER IT TAKES to draw closer to God and become more like Jesus each day, so that together, we can tell the Master of Death, "NOT TODAY!"

All the best,

Christina

​[**www.sayyestoholiness.com**](https://preview.convertkit-mail.com/click/dpheh0hz/aHR0cDovL3d3dy5jaHJpc3RpbmFzZW1tZW5zLmNvbS8%3D)​

*@SayYestoHoliness on Facebook*

Two ways to help you be the light for those around you this week:

1) Gain clarity, focus, and increase your capacity for doing good by participating in a Liveanar that will help you close the gap between dreaming and doing entitled, "Being Unhackable in Work and Life in 2021" Live-anar TONIGHT--Monday, December 28th at 7pm Central.

​[You can sign up here](https://cs-development-group.ck.page/84db87a4da), or click the image below.

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2) Help your entire family be the light by participating in the [Emmanuel Christmas Fair and Festival.](https://smartcatholics.com/emmanuel/) I myself will be sharing a favorite Christmas story (or two!) in my own talk, so make sure to make plans to join in the celebration!

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This is a FREE event, so simply go to: [www.smartcatholics.com/emmanuel](https://smartcatholics.com/emmanuel/) or click the image above to sign up today!

*PS--*Do you have a question, are looking for clarity, or want to go deeper in your spiritual life? If so, I am here to help. Just [reach out and schedule a FREE 15 minute consultation with me.](https://calendly.com/christinasemmens/15min)​

PPS--Have you gotten your copy of my latest book, [***Say Yes: Discovering Purpose, Peace and Abundance in Daily Life.***](https://www.amazon.com/Say-Yes-Discovering-Purpose-Abundance/dp/164746269X/ref%3Dsr_1_2?dchild=1&keywords=Say+yes+semmens&qid=1595793109&sr=8-2) yet?

You can [***purchase the book on Amazon***](https://www.amazon.com/Say-Yes-Discovering-Purpose-Abundance/dp/164746269X/ref%3Dsr_1_2?dchild=1&keywords=Say+yes+semmens&qid=1595793109&sr=8-2) in paperback, hardback and Kindle, or you can receive book bonuses [*by ordering my book online through my website.*](https://book.sayyestoholiness.com/say-yes35815011)​

*If you have already read my book, PLEASE take 5 minutes and*[*post reviews on Amazon,*](https://www.amazon.com/Say-Yes-Discovering-Abundance-Bilingual/dp/164746269X/ref%3Dsr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=say+yes+semmens&qid=1600655689&sr=8-1)*share with your friends, and invite them to join the*[*Say Yes to Holiness Today FB group*](https://www.facebook.com/groups/sayyestoholinesstoday/)*, so they can benefit from all of what is going on within the*[*Say Yes Movement*](https://app.convertkit.com/campaigns/5310273/www.sayyestoholiness.com/the-movement)*.*

*PPPS--Don't forget to check out and*[*subscribe to the Say Yes to Holiness podcast*](https://anchor.fm/sayyestoholiness)*. You can listen to the*[*latest episodes of the podcast*](https://preview.convertkit-mail.com/click/zvtghnh9/aHR0cHM6Ly9hbmNob3IuZm0vc2F5eWVzdG9ob2xpbmVzcw%3D%3D)*on ITunes, Spotify and Anchor. Bonus episodes of my podcasts are released through my email list, and that is also how notifications concerning upcoming events are announced, so make sure not to miss out on anything in the weeks ahead!*

*Finally, please share this newsletter with others, and invite them to join by*[*signing up for the email list here*](https://preview.convertkit-mail.com/click/opfkhqh3/aHR0cDovL2NocmlzdGluYXNlbW1lbnMuY29tLw%3D%3D), or by texting "SAYYESTOHOLINESS" to 66866.

*More information about Say Yes to Holiness can be found at:*[*www.sayyestoholiness.com*](https://preview.convertkit-mail.com/click/pnceh9hk/aHR0cDovL3d3dy5zYXl5ZXN0b2hvbGluZXNzLmNvbS8%3D), along with [*articles on the Say Yes Blog*](https://preview.convertkit-mail.com/click/pnceh9hk/aHR0cDovL2NocmlzdGluYXNlbW1lbnMuY29tL2Jsb2cv)*or follow me on Instagram at: christinasemmens.*