



Fraternity of Fatherhood

A Spiritual Fraternity for All Men

Volume 8

Issue 4



Dec 10, 2019

PREPARE THE WAY
MALACHI 3:1-4



Joseph Speaks in His Hiddenness By: Brendan McVicker

One of my most favorite teachings of Fr. Pinto is from his Christmas message of 2011. It is simple. I have read it in scripture hundreds of times. But it has hit me in a deeper way over the years and not just at Christmas time. That those who seek to find Christ, will find Him. Those who seek Him, will find Him! And the Lord will reveal Himself to us if we truly and sincerely seek Him.

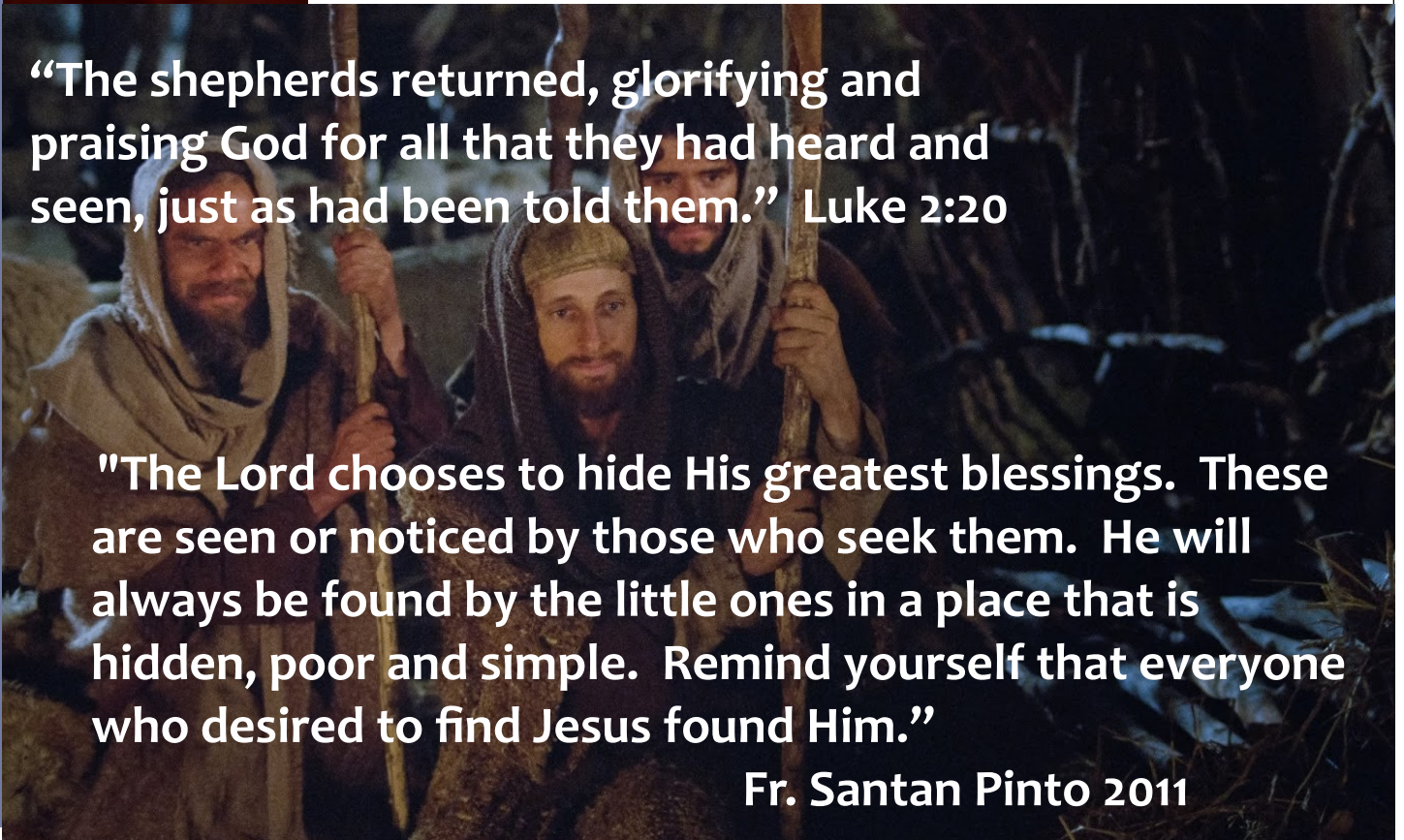
Father's words are ...*"The Lord chooses to hide His greatest blessings. These are seen or noticed by those who seek them. He will always be found by the little ones in a place that is hidden, poor and simple. What is important for us this Christmas is to find within our hearts a spark and keep working at...Remind yourself that everyone who desired to see Jesus found Him. Learn this Christmas to keep this little candle of devotion burning in your heart!"*

I really love this teaching. I have shared some of my ponderance of it in the past, but over this last year, I have felt drawn toward Joseph thinking, well, if I do what Joseph did then I will find Him. No one to me is more simple and hidden to the world. My first thought in looking to the Bible on Joseph was there is not much there; He says nothing in the Gospels and literally only a few lines are written about him primarily in the nativity story. Oops...wrong thing to say. I could hear in my heart that very distinct hint of Father Pinto sayingOh you have no idea, what is written in the gospels on Joseph is plenty, if you look. And it is so true, if I would open my eyes. But am I steadfast enough to not be concerned with greatness of the
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"The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all that they had heard and seen, just as had been told them." Luke 2:20

"The Lord chooses to hide His greatest blessings. These are seen or noticed by those who seek them. He will always be found by the little ones in a place that is hidden, poor and simple. Remind yourself that everyone who desired to find Jesus found Him."

Fr. Santan Pinto 2011



Joseph Speaks in His Hiddenness

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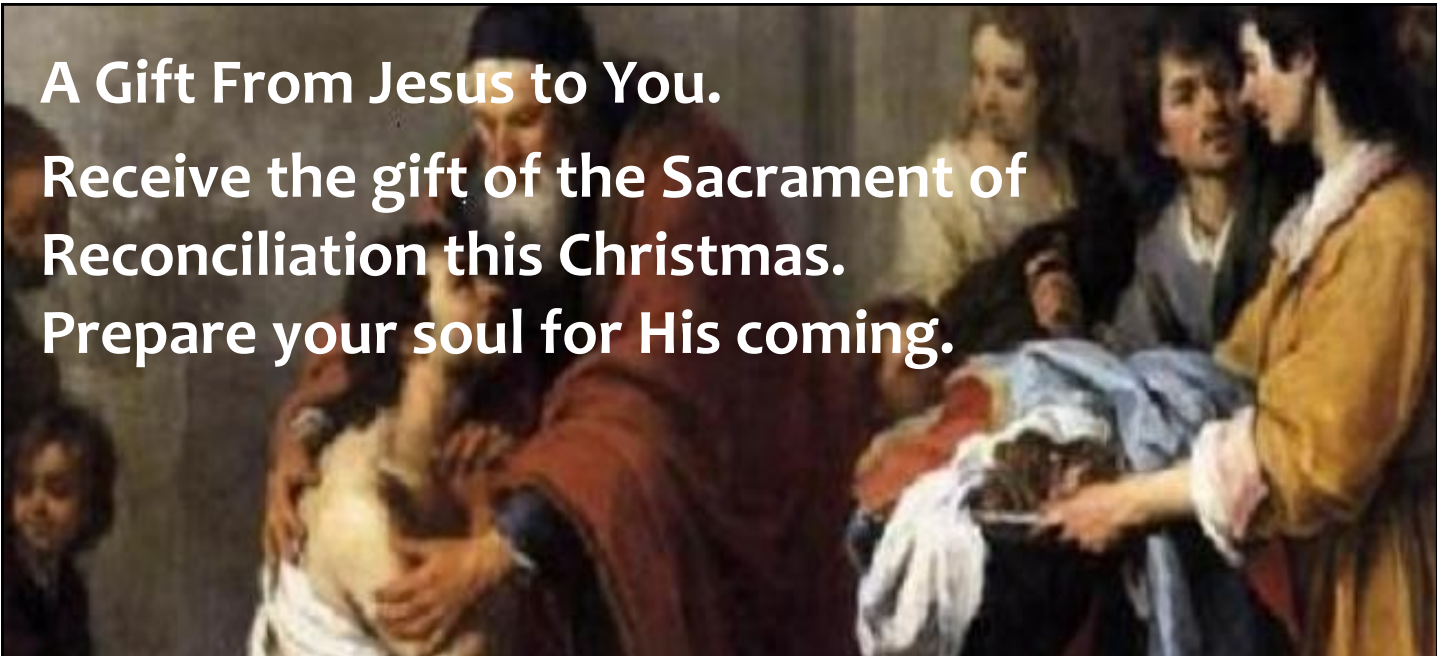
world, to be small, be little, to be hopeful, not let fear get in the way and to get myself out of the way of the Holy Spirit.

In my studying on Joseph, I came across a book that I absolutely love called My Life with the Saints by James Martin, SJ. Fr. Martin says it so perfectly. He says, "Whenever the death of Joseph occurred, he is not mentioned beyond those few early passages in Scripture. After that, it is Joseph's life that becomes hidden. It is this hiddenness of Joseph's life that speaks to me. Appearing only briefly in the Gospels, given no words to speak, Joseph leads a life of quiet service to God, a life of humility..hidden from the world, but visible to God. This hiddenness is attractive to me because it is so far from the goals of my own selfish desires. In a culture that prizes the bold gesture, the public proclamation, the newsworthy article." How often do we find ourselves in this little trap, that if we are going to do a good work or gesture, then we want to make sure everyone will know about it. But we need to keep striving for that hiddenness. In Fr. Pinto's teaching he says *what is important for us this Christmas is to find within our hearts a spark and keep working at it...Can we challenge ourselves to keep working at it.*

But if we open our eyes, this hidden life of quiet service to God, that we saw Joseph uphold so wonderfully, is all over the place in our communities. I see it in the many ministeries of the church; so many serving the poor, collecting and building food boxes, visiting the homebound, taking Eucharist to the sick and homebound, teaching children and adults the faith. The list goes on and on with so many ministries that people are active in. We see it in those that work in the homeless shelters and serve them. We see it in the mothers and fathers that work tirelessly so their kids can have a better life, many of them single to do it alone. The parents or siblings of mentally challenged children who care so unselfishly their whole life, who's pains and challenges are never seen. As Fr. Martin says, "There are countless hidden lives of love and service of others. The day to day pouring out of oneself to God. It astonishes me how many of these people embrace their hidden lives of service with joy."

Hidden lives are holy lives. Joseph is such a perfect example for us. He didn't have all the answers but he remained steadfast in the invitation of the Lord. He trusted that God would provide and that His protection was with them. So if we mirror Joseph in his trust, his service, in his littleness, in his hiddenness, even just a little bit, then maybe he can assist us in working to live our lives so that we can find Jesus.

Maybe we can live a life hidden to the world, but visible to God. And when we seek Jesus and find Him, then just like the shepherds, we will glorify and praise God for all we have seen and heard. Merry Christmas!



A Gift From Jesus to You.

Receive the gift of the Sacrament of Reconciliation this Christmas.

Prepare your soul for His coming.

A Journey In Contemplation

By: Fr. Santan Pinto SOLT

As we enter into this Christmas season let us deepen our prayer and draw close to our Lord and to the Holy Family. Enjoy this wonderful gift of contemplative prayer by Fr. Santan Pinto taken from Father's book Prayer in Your Life.

A JOURNEY IN CONTEMPLATION

I shall now take you on a journey with me, into prayer called "contemplation." By the means of this prayer we enter the same time with Jesus, Mary and Joseph and become part of their lives. Contemplation is very simple and easy for those who have the heart of a child.

Go to the Holy Family, to Joseph and Mary. The Father chooses you to serve the Child Jesus. God needs your help. (Or as a disciple, this is the way you wish to follow your Master.) You knock at the door. Joseph comes out to greet you. What is his greeting? How do you introduce yourself? The two of you enter the stable. Try and miss nothing as you use all your senses to understand this mystery of God's presence. You begin to spend your entire life now with this family, for you now belong to it. Now you are in the company of Jesus, and you want to learn how to be God's little child.

You watch Jesus, the cradle, the swaddling clothes, the stillness as this Child smiles at you. This is His "welcome home" to you. You listen to the sounds He makes, just like any other child. Whatever happens from then on are memories that you want to write in your heart. You watch both Joseph and Mary and they, too, stand in stillness. You join them in wonder and praise.

Now you begin worshipping the Lord in your own way. Smiling at this Child is a happy moment in your life. Feel the quiet, peace and relaxation that this brings to you. Jesus stretches His tiny hands towards you. God is reaching out to you. You then reach out to Jesus and you find His little hand grasping your little finger. In that grasp He asks you, "I want to know you more. I want to love you more. Will you allow Me?" You kiss His feet, for He is your Master, Lord and God.

Mary sees your fondness and the Child's reaction to you. She bends gently and takes Jesus from the crib. You see her looking at Jesus and Jesus looking at her. Then she gives Jesus to you. He, the Lord of lords, now humble as a little Child, is in your arms.

You begin now talking to Jesus, loving Him with the love of a child.



Portland, Oregon Men

....Our Fraternity meets every second Saturday of the month at St. Mary's Cathedral for 7:30AM Mass followed by our breakfast meeting at the Kingston Grill. We conclude at 9:30AM.

Our group consists of single and married men. Right now we are studying the "Carry Your Family In Your Heart" Fatherhood Guidelines. Contact Brendan 503-358-4963. (mcvickerfamily@comcast.net)

Come join us!



A Fraternity for All Men

The Fraternity of Fatherhood is for men of all ages. Our desire is to serve the Lord in all areas of our lives and to especially model our gift and responsibilities as fathers after the example of God the Father and His goodness. We support men; meeting them where they are. We engage in one-on-one friendships and provide opportunities for group activity, support and formation.

We entrust the Fatherhood Fraternity to the patronage of Saint Joseph.

Our Mission

To serve as men dedicated to the Lord in all aspects of our lives. To encourage and support men / fathers throughout the world in their gift and responsibilities as fathers. To encourage and support fathers "to respond" to their vocation, to protect and remain strong carrying their families in their hearts. Our desire is to be united to The Lord and fulfill our holy mission as fathers.

What is it we hope to do?

Bring men / fathers, closer to God by inviting them to learn their faith, challenging them to live their faith and encouraging them to love and share their faith. In addition, we invite those not married as this is a time to discern their vocation and calling in the Church.

As Fraternity of Fatherhood members, we are committed to grow and be formed spirituality, to support each other, to be active and supportive in our parishes. We are committed to learn who we are as Catholic men, to be discovered through our life experiences, prayer, studying Scripture and the documents of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, obedience to the Holy Roman Pontiff, our Roman Catholic Bishops and our parish Pastors. The formation of "Fatherhood" takes place in our hearts. Being a father means understanding that it is a call. When Fatherhood is received as a gift, it is accepted in humility and gratitude. Humility comes from the fact that we are weak. The pressures of the world are strong and flesh seems to have its way. Gratitude comes from the fact that the Lord is our Shepherd and He is with us always. With Him all things are possible.

I Was Given A Gift— God’s Garden

By Jerry Gross

When I came back from my trip to the hospital with Pneumonia recently, I was given a gift. I live in a retirement community and some of the people are very challenging to live with on a day to day basis.

I had always been judgemental, even though I didn’t mean to be. As a came back, I was given the gift of recognizing each and everyone of them (resident retirees) as God’s flower growing in His garden. It came to me, “Let them be.” Some of the more difficult ones to deal with, in my mind, I pictured as black sunflowers, but, again, in God’s garden, I am sure they are beautiful. So, as I now face individuals, instead of judging them, I am able to look at them and say, “God’s flowers. Let them be.”

It relieved a lot of anxiety on my part and totally cured me from my judgmentalism, at least as this point in my life.

Testimony given October 15, 2019.
Jerry is a member of the Fraternity of Fatherhood in Portland, Oregon.



“LET THEM BE”



Fraternity of Fatherhood—Group locations & Area Coordinators

Fr. Pinto has encouraged us to grow and expand the Fraternity of Fatherhood all over the world. He has granted us his permission, his blessing and he guides us spiritually. It is with this confidence that we now move forward with humility, obedience and docile hearts. If you are interested in joining a Fraternity of Fatherhood group or if you would like to start a group in your city contact Ray Emnace, Mike Allison, Stacey Hill or Brendan McVicker.

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Fraternity Sacramento Men

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Meet every third Wednesday of the month.

We meet at Denny's in Orangevale at 7:30 pm.

Please contact Mike Allison with any questions at email address...

(meallison5@gmail.com)

Hope you can join!



CARRY YOUR FAMILY IN YOUR HEART - A CALL TO HOLINESS

A husband/father's guide to his vocation and spiritual direction. Each Newsletter focuses on one of the Guidelines or Areas of Growth from the "Carry Your Family In Your Heart" book. These guidelines to our Fatherhood Vocation & Spiritual Formation have been formatted based on the Fatherhood Retreat Guideline Teachings & under Spiritual Direction of Fr. Santan Pinto, S.O.L.T.

FORGIVENESS

Men, most often, have great difficulty with forgiveness. By being able to forgive we show our greatness; we have to be able to let go. After all, we really don't have power to forgive anyhow. By letting go, we can ask God to forgive. We give it to him and don't take it back.

"Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." [\(Luke 23:34\)](#). By letting go, giving the problem to the Father, we ask for His forgiveness. By doing so, we come to better understanding of God's mercy.

God's forgiveness starts with us. Often times we believe in God's mercy and forgiveness but are not able to let go of our selfness. We hold the hurt to us tight. Without forgiveness we don't allow ourselves to make mistakes, we become critical of others, we lack compassion and understanding, we become miserable and bitter. Without forgiveness we destroy the relationships that God has given us; relationships with our brothers, sisters, wife, parents and children. Peace cannot be in a family without forgiveness.

God's mercy and forgiveness are infinite. Don't limit God working through you by not letting go. Let go. Healing our pain begins with forgiveness.

Advent

1st CANDLE – (purple) **THE PROPHECY CANDLE or CANDLE OF HOPE** – We can have hope because God is faithful and will keep the promises made to us. Our hope comes from God. (Romans 15:12-13)

2nd CANDLE – (purple) **THE BETHLEHEM CANDLE or THE CANDLE OF PREPARATION** – God kept his promise of a Savior who would be born in Bethlehem. Preparation means to "get ready". Help us to be ready to welcome YOU, O GOD! (Luke 3:4-6)

3rd CANDLE – (pink) **THE SHEPHERD CANDLE or THE CANDLE OF JOY** – The angels sang a message of JOY! (Luke 2:7-15)

4th CANDLE – (purple) **THE ANGEL CANDLE or THE CANDLE OF LOVE** – The angles announced the good news of a Savior. God sent his only Son to earth to save us, because he loves us! (John 3:16-17)

5th CANDLE – (white) **"CHRIST CANDLE"** – The white candle reminds us that Jesus is the spotless lamb of God, sent to wash away our sins! His birth was for his death, his death was for our birth! (John 1:29)



Saints Corner - Top 5 Saints for Advent

By: Stephen Beale

1. Holy Mary, Mother of God: A teenaged Jewish virgin who was told that she would miraculously conceive by the Holy Spirit and give birth to the savior of the world, Mary is the ultimate Christian believer, a humble woman whose faith was more on the order of a mountain, than a mustard seed. Mary was one of the lucky few who witnessed Christ and His miraculous ministry on earth, but it was a journey that began and ended in dark night of the soul—darkness at first in being unable to see the promise delivered to her, and then, utter, horrible blackness at the end when her hoped-for Savior was put to death on a Cross. As Pope Benedict once wrote: "For Mary, as for Abraham, faith is trust in, and obedience to, God, even when he leads her through darkness. It is a letting go, a releasing, a handing over of oneself to the truth, to God. Faith, in the luminous darkness of God's inscrutable ways, is thus a conformation to him." This is the faith that seeks understanding, but doesn't demand it—the faith that remains true to the very end, even when all seems lost.

2. St. John of the Cross: It may be no accident that St. John of the Cross' feast day is celebrated during the Advent season (December 14). For it is he who is best known for his moving account of the "dark night of the soul" that all Christians must experience on their way to God. This darkness may be terrifying, but it is no cause for despair. As [one Carmelite nun has written](#): "The darkness of that Bethlehem night held the glory of God's greatest gift to humanity. The Carmelite friar's description of going to God through the night is not a sad dirge at all. He tells us that the night he describes is really God coming to us with the intensity of a light so dazzling it overwhelms our capacity to see. We walk through the nights of our lives with the assurance that we will see a new dawn, more glorious than any we have looked at before." Indeed, to paraphrase this writer, much like the shepherds waiting in the darkness of that night in Bethlehem, so too are we standing vigil for the Second Coming of Christ.

3. St. Joseph: As a sort of foster father on earth for Jesus, St. Joseph was entrusted with an enormously important task. In an Advent sermon, St. Bernard of Clairvaux says God treated Joseph as a man "to whom He might safely commit the most secret and sacred mystery of His heart: to whom, as to another David, the manifested hidden arcana of His wisdom, which had been known to none from the beginning of the world." Joseph not only got to see and hear what so many kings and prophets of old had desired to see and hear, St. Bernard adds, he also got to "carry in his arms, to lead by the hand, to nourish and to watch over the Infant Savior." Faithful stewardship over the gifts of God—the ultimate gift, His Gift of Himself—this is Joseph's mission.



4. St. Francis of Assisi: This great saint's extraordinary awareness of the Incarnation not only manifested itself through his famous stigmata—it also led him to set up the first Nativity Scene in an Italian town of Greccio in 1223 AD. This was not your dining room crèche—it was a full-blooded, living Nativity Scene, complete with an actual ox and donkey and a life-sized manger. One onlooker reportedly even saw a vision of St. Francis holding the Holy Child. St. Francis saw the living Nativity Scene as a way to "excite the inhabitants" to commemorate Christmas with "great devotion," according to Bonaventure, one of his early biographers. It appears to have had its desired effect, as Bonaventure describes it: "The brethren were summoned, the people ran together, the forest resounded with their voices, and that venerable night was made glorious by many and brilliant lights and sonorous psalms of praise. The man of God stood before the manger, full of devotion and piety, bathed in tears and radiant with joy; the Holy Gospel was chanted by Francis, the Levite of Christ."

5. St. John the Baptist: St. John the Baptist's entire existence was meant to point to that of another: Jesus Christ. As the Gospel of Matthew recounts, his was a voice crying out in the desert, the one called to prepare the way for Christ, as prophesied by Isaiah. St. John the Baptist's message is a simple one: *How do we prepare the way for Christ—in our lives and others? Do we cry out for Christ?*



POSTAGE

Fraternity of Fatherhood

**We entrust the Fatherhood Fraternity to the patronage
of St. Joseph.**



St. Joseph ...Pray For Us.



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To submit feedback and/or suggestions for future article topics, please email the editors,

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