

“Becoming Bethlehem” will be theme of Advent Mission

Fr. Nathan Castle O.P. will lead the 2018 Advent Mission with the theme “Becoming Bethlehem: Being the Place Where Christ Is Born.”

Fr. Nathan is a Tucson-based lecturer, retreat director and author who served as pastor of St. Andrew Newman Center in Riverside.

The Advent Mission will take place at St. Catherine Church on Dec. 3, 4 and 5. There will be sessions from 9-11 a.m. and from 7-9 p.m. each day.

Fr. Nathan, a member of the Dominican Order, had this to say about the upcoming mission:

Q. Why did you pick the theme "Becoming Bethlehem"?

A. I chose Becoming Bethlehem: Being the Place Where Christ is Born because it's so easy to imagine the events of the life of Jesus the Christ as historical...long ago and far away, and happening to other people. But the incarnation is an unfolding event. We are as important to this mission as Mary was. God is hoping to hear our “Yes” to the request for Christ to be born in us.

Q. What will be your message to parishioners at St. Catherine?

A. My message is this question: What if it's true? What if I am that important to God's dream for the world? What would I have to do to fully take part?

Q. How will each session be different?

A. The three sessions over three days will use a past/present/future construct like Dickens' “A Christmas Carol.” (Remember the ghosts of Christmas past, present and future?) Each attendee will be led through a reflective, meditative process to ask to be shown how their incarnation story is unfolding.

Q. How can attending help me to enrich my faith and to better prepare for Christmas?

A. Simply slowing down and preparing spiritually for Christmas is what Advent is all about. We can get so busy that we're “not-at-home” to the events and persons in our own lives. Inviting the Holy Spirit to dwell in us and to make room can help us all embody the miracle of Christmas.

Q. Tell us about your books.

A. “And Toto, Too: The Wizard of Oz as a Spiritual Adventure” uses the familiar, even embodied, Oz story and its music to help folks imagine the full circle of their own winding life's journey. My new book, “Afterlife, Interrupted: Helping Stuck Souls Cross Over” describes a joyful ministry to what we Catholics might call “souls in purgatory” for whom we pray, especially in November.

Read more about Fr. Nathan at <https://nathan-castle.com/>