December 5th, 2020

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

It is amazing how the Lord reminds us to be watchful and alert. Last Sunday during a private Mass I read the Gospel, and it was then that I realized I had used the wrong gospel for my newsletter last week. It caught me off guard. Throughout the rest of that Mass and during this past week I wondered if anyone noticed. No one called to comment. It reminded me that mistakes happen, and the Lord can use even our mistakes to bring about the spread of the gospel. When we are attentive to our blessings and failures, we can see how God uses them to celebrate His presence. The season of Advent encourages us to prepare and to also be attentive to the ever presence of the Lord walking with us, even in our mistakes.

Being watchful means being attentive to what is going on around us, especially in a world that seems to fly by and we can’t close our eyes. Advent is a good time to be attentive to the needs of our brothers and sisters. From close family members to the neighbor down the street that just moved in, we all need to notice how we can bring Christ to them through acts of kindness.

Being alert is recognizing how we can notice the presence of God right in front of us. I went to the store this past week, and as I was leaving I noticed a woman trying to juggle a young child in her arms as well as her groceries. Out of the blue a gentleman comes along and offers to carry her grocery bags. It stopped me in my tracks, and I was in awe of the beauty of that encounter. They were in no more need of assistance, but I believe that sharing this simple story reminds us to be alert to God’s presence right in front of us, even the most simple acts of kindness.

This week we celebrate the Immaculate Conception. The conception of Mary without original sin began a beautiful life’s journey of openness to living the will of God, a model for all to follow. Mary’s watchfulness and alertness to God’s presence throughout her entire life brought great rejoicing to the world. Although we all struggle with our own sinfulness, Mary’s witness gives us encouragement to stay strong and alert to the ways that God can and will be with us as we journey.

“We Give Catholic” has come and gone, but the outpouring of support will last into the future. The overwhelming success of this fundraiser will not only support our designated project but will provide resources for future projects as well. Thank you to all those that worked behind the scenes to organize this fundraiser and helped make it a great success. I am grateful for the generosity of the many supporters that participated this year.

I ask you to keep me in your prayers this coming week. I am hoping for a negative Covid-19 test result on Monday, which will allow me to begin phase two of my chemo treatments later in the week. Let us always remember to keep all people affected by this virus in our prayers and to protect those who are caring for them.

Light of Christ!

Fr. Workman