

CATHOLIC EDUCATION:

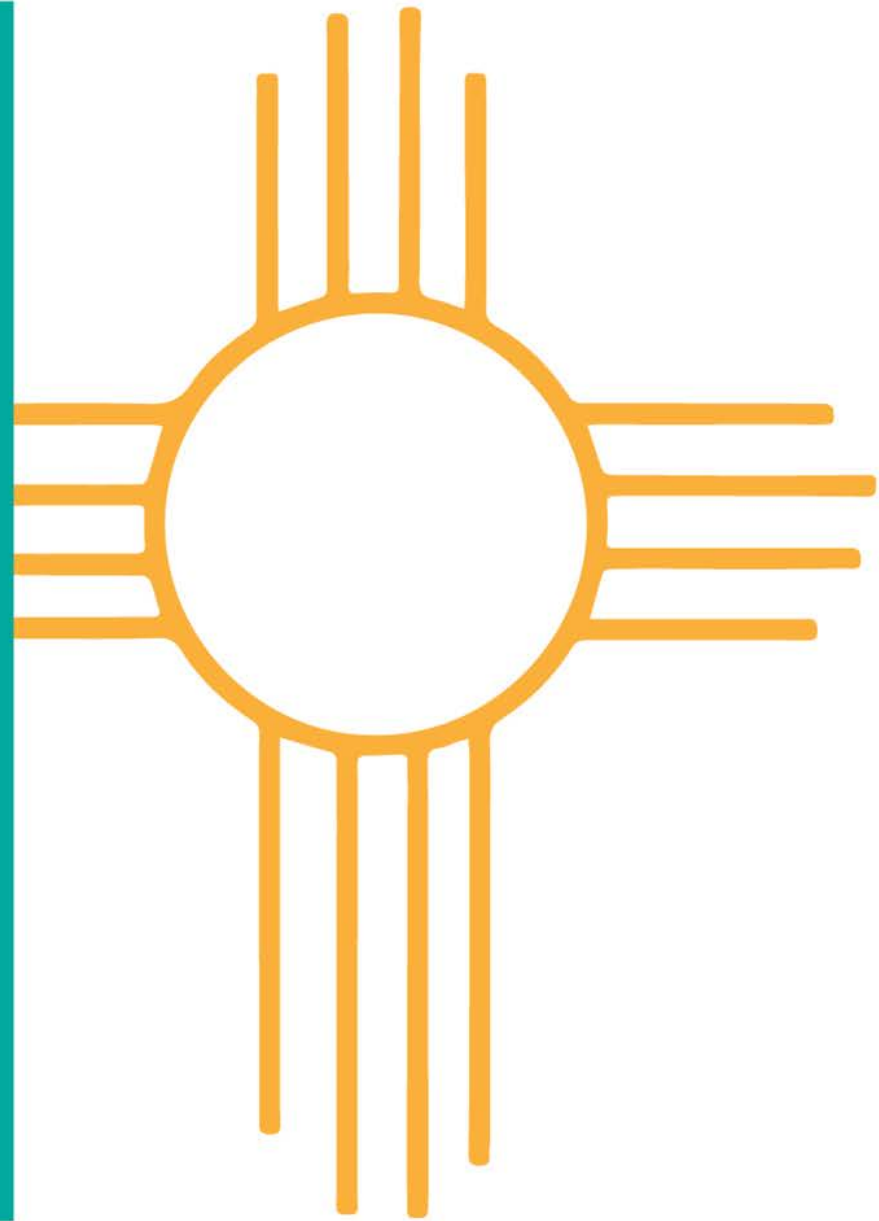
REBUILD

RESTORE



RENEW

TOGETHER

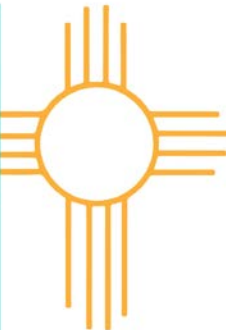




December/Advent Prayer Service

REDISCOVER

CATHOLIC EDUCATION:
REBUILD
RESTORE
 **RENEW**
TOGETHER





“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KZggySBroc>

Opening Prayer

God of our days and seasons,
We enter this Advent season with hearts full of hope.
Continue to bring light to our darkest days.
Help us to bring the peace, love and joy of the Advent season to all those we meet.
Help us to embrace the season as a chance to rebuild our faith and our community.
Give us hearts for justice that we may live out the true meaning of Christ coming into our hearts.
Amen. +



A Reading from the Book of Zephaniah

Sing aloud, O daughter Zion; shout, O Israel! Rejoice and exalt with all your heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! The Lord has taken away the judgements against you, he has turned away your enemies. The king of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; you shall fear disaster no more. On that day, it shall be said to Jerusalem: Do not fear, O Zion; do not let your hands grow weak. The Lord, your God is in your midst, a warrior who gives victory; he will rejoice over you with gladness, he will renew you with his love. The Lord, your God, will exult over you with loud singing as on a day of festival.

The Word of the Lord. **R.** Thanks be to God.



Questions for Personal Reflection

Zephaniah was an Israelite prophet who warned the people of Israel and other nations that God would judge their ways. The verses of the book of this prophet speak of justice and hope that come with faithfulness to God.

- *Where are we hearing prophetic voices today?*
- *What are the 'disasters' that you think we can avoid if we listen to these prophetic voices?*

The Season of Advent

The season of Advent has its origins in the third century. At first, it was a season of repentance, very much like Lent. In the 7th century, 'O Antiphons' began to appear which signaled a preparation for the solemnity of the nativity, the Savior's birth. Eventually, it took the form of the four-week preparation that we know today.

- *Can you think of an Advent hymn that begins with 'O _____'?*
- *In this season of preparing our hearts, what are some actions that you could adopt?*

Advent Actions to Consider

- Write prayers on slips of paper and keep in a jar leading up to Christmas
- Keep a decorated shoebox to collect articles for a food cupboard or city shelter
- Research Advent and Christmas traditions
- Read the scripture passages of the season – the stories of Gabriel, Zechariah, Mary, Elizabeth and Joseph
- Look into artwork that depicts angels
- Embrace the color purple, assist with decorating at school or in your home
- In the spirit of rebuilding, think of ways to bring a spirit of hope to your community
- Commit to actions to rebuild the health of the environment where you live

Closing Prayer

God of all Creation,

In this Advent season, fill our hearts with a spirit of hope that we may work to rebuild where there is woundedness.

May we embrace the hope that comes with the birth of Jesus again in our hearts.

Amen. +

