

AMERICAN NATIONAL CATHOLIC CHURCH ADVENT LETTER



"Oh, that you would rend the heavens and come down, with the mountains quaking before you, while you wrought awesome deeds we could not hope for, such as they had not heard of from of old. No ear has ever heard, no eye ever seen, any God but you doing such deeds for those who wait for him."

(Isaiah 63:16b-17)

+ In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Peace be with you!

This Advent, the American National Catholic Church (ANCC) echoes Isaiah's longing as we pray with the universal Church during this period of waiting and watching: *Maranatha*, Come Lord Jesus! We celebrate in this wonderful time *the already, but not yet*. We retell, with great rejoicing, the story of God's love come to us, and wait with joyful anticipation for Christ to come again.

The ANCC joins our sisters and brothers in watching and waiting for the in-break of God into our lives as we celebrate the reality of this incarnate love.

We in the ANCC are like those of old who waited on the Lord. Many of us prayed for a Church where we could encounter God's welcoming love in the sacraments of our ancient tradition, given freely and without condition. We longed for a Church where we could be all God created us to be, we remaining challenged to become all God calls us to be.



Most Rev. George R. Lucey, FCM
Bishop Lucey is the presiding bishop of the American National Catholic Church.

An Advent Prayer

Come, long-expected Jesus. Excite in me a wonder at the wisdom and power of Your Father and ours. Receive my prayer as part of my service of the Lord who enlists me in God's own work for justice.

Come, long-expected Jesus. Excite in me a hunger for peace: peace in the world, peace in my home, peace in myself.

Come, long-expected Jesus. Excite in me a joy responsive to the Father's joy. I seek His will so I can serve with gladness, singing and love.

Come, long-expected Jesus. Excite in me the joy and love and peace it is right to bring to the manger of my Lord. Raise in me, too, sober reverence for the God who acted there, hearty gratitude for the life begun there, and spirited resolution to serve the Father and Son.

I pray in the name of Jesus Christ, whose advent I hail. Amen.

We thank God for raising up the American National Catholic Church in response to our prayers; we pray that God keep us humble in his service as we wait for his return.

In this sacred season, we gratefully recall how God has blessed us. We have just ordained two new priests, established the Order of St. Dominic, have one woman and two men studying for Holy Orders, and added two new parishes and a ministry to the sick. In addition, we have solidified our Catholic presence as a partner with other Christians in witnessing to the extravagant love of God in the world.

This Advent season we know the reality of God-with-us, and give thanks to this God for his great deeds. We wait in hope, we pray with faith, and approach with awe this God who for love for us leaped from heaven to be among us. Indeed, God has done mighty things for us; holy is His name.

This Advent let us bind our hearts to the humility of the Bethlehem stable, praying without ceasing for God to come again.

Given under my signature, this First Sunday of Advent 2011, in the fourth year of my Episcopacy.



Most Rev. George R. Lucey, FCM
Presiding Bishop