

## In Between

Email deacon Mick at [mhumbree@comcast.net](mailto:mhumbree@comcast.net) if you wish to continue receiving weekly

### Monday Dec. 8th, 2025

Scripture - Luke 1:28-34 He (angel Gabriel) went in and said to her, 'Rejoice, you who enjoy God's favour! The Lord is with you.' She was deeply disturbed by these words and asked herself what this greeting could mean, but the angel said to her, 'Mary, do not be afraid; you have won God's favour. Look! You are to conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you must name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David; he will rule over the House of Jacob forever and his reign will have no end.' Mary said to the angel, 'But how can this come about, since I have no knowledge of man?'

Observation: Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception; historically the Church realized that if Jesus was unique, then the Mother of Jesus must have been also. Eventually formal doctrine around Mary would be codified, one being the exceptional conception of Mary without sin.

Narrative: Mary faced three strong emotions in facing this transformational moment in her life: being disturbed, fear, and bewilderment. It should not surprise us that monumental moments in our life will involve the need to overcome difficult emotions as well.

Question: In/during your difficult moments of life, what emotional/personal obstacles did you overcome? What process did you go through in overcoming them?

### Tuesday Dec. 9th, 2025

Scripture - Matthew 18: 12-14 "What do you think? If any man has a hundred sheep, and one of them has gone astray, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go and search for the one that is straying? If it turns out that he finds it, truly I say to you, he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine which have not gone astray. So it is not *the* will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones perish.

Observation: as a metaphor, the mention of leaving 99 sheep for one would be absurd to a shepherd. But that is the point. God's love rejoices in all that are lost and find their way back through Jesus and faith.

Narrative: No matter how "lost" you feel, God's promise is to be always, as in always, looking for you.

Question: In your lost, afraid, disheartened moments, through whom or by what were you "found"; that which allowed you to move forward with more comfort or which quieted the storm in your life at least in that moment?

### Wednesday Dec. 10th, 2025

Scripture - Matthew 11:28-30 'Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest. Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Yes, my yoke is easy and my burden light.'

Observation: In an early agrarian society, the imagery of beasts of burden assisting in the fields would have been very familiar. So too would have been the analogous link to the burden that the Roman Empire, the secular kingship, and the religious purity system that dominated their lives.

Narrative: We must remember that Jesus did not say in these verses that following His way would be burden free; He still called it a yoke after all. He did not say take a lounge chair or a dip in the pool; only that the burden of following would be more restful, more appropriate, more in line with being born in the image and likeness of God.

Question: Where, through what, or with whom do you find spiritual fulfillment and "rest?"

### **Thursday Dec. 11th, 2025**

Scripture - Matthew 11:11-15 'In truth I tell you, of all the children born to women, there has never been anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of Heaven is greater than he. Since John the Baptist came, up to this present time, the kingdom of Heaven has been subjected to violence and the violent are taking it by storm. Because it was towards John that all the prophecies of the prophets and of the Law were leading; and he, if you will believe me, is the Elijah who was to return. Anyone who has ears should listen!

Observation: One of the foci in the 2nd and 3rd weeks of Advent, in particular the Sunday gospel, is the foretelling and anticipation of the coming of Jesus >> thus John the Baptist > whether references to John in the early portion of the gospels while preaching or later when Jesus reflects on John's importance.

Narrative: "It was toward John that all the prophecies of the prophets and of the Law were leading..."  
Post-resurrection, the message for us is that all things point toward our discipleship on behalf of the mission and message of Jesus; Jesus as primary prophet and messenger of the Good News.

Question: How or in what ways do you see yourself as a messenger of Jesus to those you impact most in life?

### **Friday Dec. 12th, 2025**

Scripture - Luke 1:26-28 Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the descendants of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And coming in, he said to her, "Greetings, favored one! The Lord *is* with you."

Observation: I bet Mary, being of a very young age, and in her unfavorable situation culturally and feeling quite alone, would have found these initial words and presence of God via the angel most comforting indeed.

Narrative: All Initial interactions, through words or otherwise, with the Spirit of God, typically leave a lasting impression.

Question: Reflect on your first interactions with a loving God, friend, spouse, child. How did you feel?

### **Saturday Dec. 13th, 2025**

Scripture - Matthew 17:10-13 And the disciples put this question to him, 'Why then do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?' He replied, 'Elijah is indeed coming, and he will set everything right again; however, I tell you that Elijah has come already and they did not recognise him but treated him as they pleased; and the Son of man will suffer similarly at their hands.' Then the disciples understood that he was speaking of John the Baptist.

Observation: In Matthew's gospel, believed to be written to a predominantly Jewish based community, it references back or invokes Hebrew scripture and its prophets much more commonly than the other three gospels.

Narrative: Tradition and legacy commonly matter if you wish support from others. Invoking past or present heroes can assist us in developing support for a purpose or cause. For instance, Catholics invoke individuals such as Mother Teresa or Pope Leo. Politicians invoke the famous ones of the past. Great athletes or coaches are invoked to motivate performance, etc.

Question: Are there examples of tradition and legacy in your life, especially within family gatherings, that helps hold up and honor the best of what life has to offer? Who have been the heroes in your life?