



# Una Fides

An Apostolate  
for Today's Catholic

- ◆ PRAYER
- ◆ FELLOWSHIP
- ◆ STUDY

Newsletter

Since 2003

**Pope Benedict XVI's Prayer Intention for December:**  
That migrants throughout the world may be welcomed with generosity and authentic love, especially by Christian communities.

### **Wisdom of the Saints for December**

St. Ambrose

December 7th

"The Lord Jesus took compassion on us in order that He might call us to Himself and not scare us away. He comes as someone gentle, someone humble."

St. John of the Cross

December 14th

"If you do not learn to deny yourself, you can make no progress in perfection."



## SAYING "NO" IN ADVENT

Advent is here and once again we are presented with the challenge of living this holy season in the true Catholic spirit. It is a special time of prayer and penance in which God wants to draw each of us closer to Himself. Too easily and too often, though, Advent and Christmas can get filled up with lots of distraction, stress and "stuff".

Jennifer Fulwiler, self-described atheist to Catholic convert and mother of 5 young children, writes at [www.ConversionDiary.com](http://www.ConversionDiary.com) which was recently voted one of the top Catholic blogs on the internet. Jennifer gives some terrific yet simple advice to help us succeed in living a well-observed Advent. To read her entire piece, go to:

<http://www.conversiondiary.com/jen>

*It's Advent! That means that Christmas is just around the corner! And that means that it's time for another post from me in which I try to figure out how I'm going to avoid getting completely overwhelmed this time around. As I've mentioned before, this is one of my favorite times of the year, but it's also the liturgical season that I find it most difficult to observe. It's hard to prayerfully, calmly prepare for the birth of the Lord when there are Christmas parties to attend, presents to buy, gingerbread houses to make, lights to string around the house, and a whole host of other seasonal activities that could easily keep me twice as busy as I normally am.*

Jen goes on to reflect on a lecture she once heard on the subject of balance and importance of learning to say no. **To say no is to protect what you've already said yes to.** *I thought this was a refreshing way to look at it. I used to think of turning down requests to get involved in some new activity as a bad thing. I'd always have the lingering sense that if I were a good friend/mother/daughter/parishioner, I would always say yes*

*to whatever was asked of me. When I turned down potential projects or activities, it felt like I was doing something wrong. But thinking of it in light of my existing responsibilities changed my perspective. When I say no to hosting a neighborhood cookie exchange at my house, I'm really saying yes to the commitment I made to have our family spend more quiet time together this season. When I say no to writing an article about praying more in Advent, I'm saying yes to my goal of actually praying more during Advent. And so on. So the questions I'm asking myself right now, this first week in Advent are: "What are the things that I should be saying yes to this season?" And, therefore, to what do I need to start saying no?"*

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### Mary's Christmas Dream: An Advent Reflection

I had a dream, Joseph. I don't understand it, not really, but I think it was about a birthday celebration for our Son. I think that was what it was all about. The people had been preparing for it for about 6 weeks. They had decorated the house and bought new clothes. They'd gone shopping many times and bought elaborate gifts. It was peculiar, though, because the presents weren't for our Son. They wrapped them in beautiful paper and tied them with lovely bows and stacked them under a tree. Yes, a tree, Joseph, right in their house. They'd decorated the tree also. The branches were full of glowing balls and sparkling ornaments. There was a figure on the top of the tree. It looked like an angel might look. Oh, it was beautiful. Everyone was laughing and happy. They were all excited about the gifts. They gave the gifts to each other, Joseph, and not to our Son. I don't think they even knew Him. I had the strangest feeling that if our Son had gone to this celebration He would have been intruding. Everything was so beautiful, Joseph, and everyone so gay, but it made me want to cry. **How sad for Jesus not to be wanted at His own birthday party.** I'm glad it was only a dream. How terrible, Joseph, if it had been real.

Author Unknown

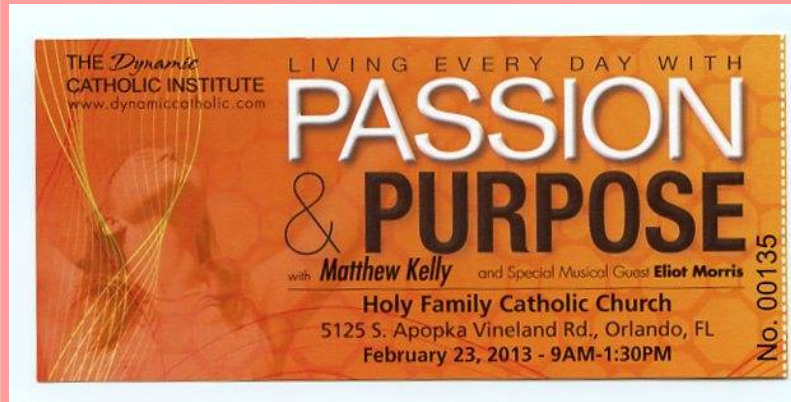
### Christmas Gift Ideas to Nourish the Soul

Tickets to "Passion and Purpose" Live Event with Matthew Kelly,

renowned Catholic speaker and author.

[www.DynamicCatholic.com](http://www.DynamicCatholic.com)

To receive tickets before Christmas, call 407.340.5145



Inspirational Newly Released Films such as: *The Way*, *October Baby*, *Cosmic Origins*, *Padre Pio*, *The Greatest Miracle*, *Saint Barbara*, *The Might Macs* (Ignatius Press)

Lighthouse Catholic Media Uplifting CDs on various topics make terrific stocking stuffers for all ages.

Invite a friend or family member to check out this new website which is an initiative of the Diocese of Washington, DC to encourage shoppers to remember the true meaning of Christmas:

[www.FindthePerfectGift.org](http://www.FindthePerfectGift.org)

Gift ideas for Toddlers through Teens: [www.Catholicchild.com](http://www.Catholicchild.com)

Shop with confidence for resources in-line with Catholic teaching.

Free shipping on most products: [www.ParishWebstore.com](http://www.ParishWebstore.com)



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