



*Serving the Spiritual Needs of Grieving Parents  
Whose Children of Any Age Have Died by Any Cause,  
No Matter How Long Ago*

**Your Emmaus Ministry  
Remote Retreat Guide  
December 26, 2020  
9:30am ET  
(or a convenient time for you)**

**CHRISTMAS**

**He's Come!**



**Preparation:**

Ahead of time, we recommend you find a quiet place in your home where you can immerse yourself in this retreat. Have your child's Emmaus Memorial Candle (or other candle) available along with a lighter or matches.

Take several deep breaths to cleanse your thoughts and open yourself to wherever the Holy Spirit is calling you today several minutes before the retreat is scheduled to begin.

At 9:30am ET open your email and join other fellow Emmaus Parent Companions in getting away from the rest of the world, at least for a time, to focus on God and on your precious child.

**CANDLE LIGHTING PRAYER** (Light your candle)

We begin... In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen

Lord, you are the Light of the World. *Help us feel your presence in the lighting of this candle.*

Lord, you gave us the gift of our children. *Help us feel their presence in the lighting of this candle.*

Lord, you gave us the hope of eternal life. *Help us confirm that hope in the lighting of this candle.*

Lord, you gave us love. *Help us to know that, as much as we love our children, you love them even more.*

We ask you this through Christ, Our Lord  
Amen.

**OPENING SONG:** [Away in a Manger \(Forever Amen\)](#) by Phil Wickham

Yours is the Glory, Forever Amen

**PRAYER OF THOSE MAKING A RETREAT**

Loving Spirit of Wisdom,  
Guide my thoughts and my memories.

In the light of your love,  
May I see what is important for me to remember,  
What is important for me to hold to my heart,  
And what I need to simply let go of in peace.

I trust you to be my guide,  
Even when the path seems unclear to me.

We pray this in the name of Your Son, the Healer,  
Our Lord, Jesus Christ.  
Amen.

## **SCRIPTURE READING**

### **John 1: 1-18**

In the beginning was the Word,  
and the Word was with God,  
and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning with God.  
All things came to be through him,  
and without him nothing came to be.

What came to be through him was life,  
and this life was the light of the human race;  
the light shines in the darkness,  
and the darkness has not overcome it.

A man named John was sent from God.  
He came for testimony, to testify to the light,  
so that all might believe through him.

He was not the light,  
but came to testify to the light.  
The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world,  
and the world came to be through him,  
but the world did not know him.  
He came to what was his own,  
but his own people did not accept him.

But to those who did accept him  
he gave power to become children of God,  
to those who believe in his name,  
who were born not by natural generation  
nor by human choice nor by a man's decision  
but of God.

And the Word became flesh  
and made his dwelling among us,  
and we saw his glory,  
the glory as of the Father's only Son,  
full of grace and truth.

John testified to him and cried out, saying,  
"This was he of whom I said,

"The one who is coming after me ranks ahead of me because he existed before me."

From his fullness we have all received,  
grace in place of grace,  
because while the law was given through Moses,  
grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.

No one has ever seen God.  
The only Son, God, who is at the Father's side,  
has revealed him.

The Gospel of the Lord  
Praise be to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

**REFLECTION #1:** [\*A Christmas Reflection\*](#) from Fr. Joseph Mary Cap.  
*This is the message of Christmas... We have pain and we have suffering, but in the midst of it all, God doesn't change. He is working right now in all of our mess. We are precious and priceless in the eyes of God. The darkness can never overcome this fact.*



Take a moment to pause... breathe... Reflect on what you have received from the Reflection #1.

Clear your mind before focusing on Reflection #2.



**REFLECTION #2:** [\*The Embrace of the Infant Jesus\*](#)  
from My Catholic Life

Imagine if you were privileged to be present with Jesus as an infant. He reaches out... asking you to pick him up and hold him. Take him into your arms, embrace him, and hold him tightly. Allow your experience of holding your own precious child as a baby to teach you about the love of God.

## **PRAYER**

**Loving God,**

Help us to focus on you today, remembering that the gift of Christ, is our most treasured gift for the whole year through.

Fill us with your joy and the peace of your Spirit.  
Direct our hearts and minds towards you. Help us to be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving one another, just as You forgave us.

We pray not to be caught in the beauty and exploitation of world in Lord Jesus's birth, but to remember the Humble Savior lying in a manger.

Close the door of hate and open the door of love all over the world.

Let kindness come with every gift and good desires with every greeting.

Thank you for your daily Presence in our lives, that we can be assured your heart is towards us, your eyes are over us, and your ears are open to our prayers.

May we be grateful and never forget all you have given and done for us.

In Jesus' name,

Amen.

**CLOSING HYMN:** [Hallelujah Christmas Version](#) by Cloverton/Cohen  
*With every breath, I'm singing Hallelujah!*

**CLOSING BLESSING**

Let us end our time of retreat...united with Brother John Maganzini, OFM and the Franciscan Friars at Saint Anthony Shrine in Boston, MA, by blessing one another.

Bow your head, raise your right hand as, together, we pray,

May we be filled with...

The wonder of Mary,

The obedience of Joseph,

The joy of the angels,

The eagerness of the shepherds,

The determination of the magi,

And the peace of the Christ Child,

As we await our glorious reunion with our precious children.

We pray this as we bless each other in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

**FOR FURTHER  
REFLECTION:**

- [In Loving Memory of His Daughter, Annie: A Christmas Song Dedicated to Anyone Missing Someone This Christmas](#) by Craig Aven and the Piano Guys



**Hope for Everyone.**

A Christmas Song by Matt Maher  
Bending low to be among us,  
bring your glory in the  
highest, Jesus. Truly, there  
is hope for everyone.

**The Origin of "Silent**

**Night"** by Joseph Mohr  
*First performed in 1818, the  
history of "Silent Night" is  
both interesting and  
inspirational.*



You will receive a new Emmaus Remote Retreat  
email next Friday.

Please join your fellow  
Emmaus Parent Companions  
again next Saturday at 9:30am ET

Until then, may God bless you and keep you.  
Sending many warm, virtual hugs

For past Remote Retreats, see [here](#).



