

FEATURE

People in need awaiting presence of Christ

In the Advent tradition of the Jesse Tree, branches are decorated with symbols of Old Testament figures who waited and prepared for the Messiah.

Read their Scriptural accounts and reflect on the vignettes of people who wait with hope for the presence of Christ in their lives today.

Consider a donation to the Christmas Appeal — the fund that allows the Catholic community to respond compassionately to neighbors in desperate need.

Below are names of prominent members in Jesus' "family tree," with Scripture references and suggested symbols that can be made into ornaments.

Adam & Eve (Gn 3:1-24) — man, woman, apple, serpent

Noah (Gn 6:11-9:17) — ark, rainbow,

A Jesse Tree Blessing

God of Abraham and Sarah, bless us whenever we look upon our Jesse Tree.

May it remind us of our ancestors who kept hope alive, believing in God's faithfulness.

In this Advent season, fill our hearts with hope, and move us to be good news to the poor. Amen.

pairs of animals

Abraham (Gn 12: 1-13:18) — camel, staff

Sarah (Gn 12:1-13:18) — baby, tent

Rebecca (Gn 25:19-34;27) — well

Jacob (Gn 28:10-22) — ladder

Rachel & Leah (Gn 29:15-30) — veil
Joseph (Gn 39:48) — coat of many colors

Moses (Ex 20:1-21) — stone tablets

Miriam (Ex 15:20-21) — tambourine

Joshua (Jos 6:1-15) — trumpet

Ruth (Ru) — sheaf of wheat

Deborah (Jgs 4) — tent peg and mallet

Samuel (1 Sm 3:1-18) — oil flask

David (1 Sm 16:1-16) — harp

Solomon (1 Kgs 3:4-15) — crown, temple

Isaiah (Is 11:1-9) — lion and lamb

Daniel (Dn 6:17-24) — lion

Elizabeth (Lk 1:39-55) — small house

Zechariah (Lk 1:5-25) — altar

John the Baptist (Lk 3:1-20) — water

Mary (Lk 1:26-38) — lily

Joseph (Mt 1:18-25) — hammer, saw

Jesus (Lk 2:1-20) — chi ro



✦ Catholic Courier
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Christmas Appeal Week II

What is the Christmas Appeal?

It is a cooperative effort of the Catholic Courier and diocesan Catholic Charities to raise funds that will help people in desperate financial crises.

For 24 years, the appeal has enabled the Catholic community to help thousands of people in 12 counties to meet life's basic needs. Christmas Appeal funds have been there for them when no other sources of aid were available.

Who benefits from it?

Funding from the Christmas appeal helps individuals and families in short-term financial crises. These are people who have no financial resources and are either awaiting or ineligible for assistance through other sources.

How does it work?

The appeal consists of a series of articles in the Catholic Courier and a direct-mail solicitation of past and potential donors. Appeal proceeds are allocated to the emergency funds of the following diocesan agencies: Catholic Family Center; Finger Lakes Social Ministry; Catholic Charities of the Southern Tier; Catholic Charities Livingston County outreach; Bishop Sheen Ecumenical Housing Foundation; and diocesan Urban Services.

Please use my donation to help a neighbor in need.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

This gift is in honor/memory of (circle one):

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Mail check (payable to "Christmas Appeal") and this coupon to: Christmas Appeal, c/o Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Rochester, 1150 Buffalo Road, Rochester, New York 14624

Those who wait in hope today:

Dorothy is an elderly woman on a fixed income. She has been forced to move from her apartment because of numerous code violations. The new apartment does not come with appliances, and Dorothy does not have extra money to purchase a used stove.

Albert was the victim of an armed robbery. His month's grocery money is gone. Christmas Appeal donations can help him out of his temporary financial crisis.

Ramisi is a recent widow with seven young children. She has no life insurance, no savings, no supportive relatives. She has applied, but as yet has not received public assistance.

The rent is overdue and an eviction notice has been issued. She has been relying on the food cupboard to feed her family. She struggles in her sorrow and bewilderment.

Willie was disabled as a result of a mugging. He was a contractor before the incident, but has had to sell off his tools and truck. He goes without meals in order to give money to his ex-wife for child support. A food voucher would allow him to follow a healthier diet.

Alack of medical insurance and a bout with cancer has kept Mrs. M and her family under financial and emotional stress. A plumbing repair must now be made and they do not have the resources. A food voucher would free up some household income for the emergency.

Rea's apartment was broken into and what little she had was stolen or vandalized. She is in safer housing now and has rebuilt a home again for herself and her three children by gleaning and repairing items from other people's trash. She still needs a few personal items for herself and the children.

Nancy struggles to support herself and two children with a weekly income of \$200. With a down payment, she can secure a low-interest loan to repair a leaking roof.

Anna, a refugee who speaks little English, had been an attorney in Bosnia. She's been limited to domestic work to support herself and her two children. She is now unable to do any work with a broken hand that may need corrective surgery. The family needs food assistance and clothing for the growing children.

Tom, Julie, and their children left a meager existence in Texas for factory jobs that never



materialized. Car problems used up the couple's money. They need help to purchase food and gas for the trip back.

Rolando, Diana and their two teenage daughters made it safely out of Cuba and are well on their way to self-sufficiency. Christmas Appeal funds allow Catholic Charities to extend a basic-assistance "welcome" to such modern day pilgrims.

Frances has eight children to raise alone, and she is on public assistance. Her means are limited, but her heart is big, so she agreed to care for the child of a friend who is in jail. By the end of the month she will need some extra help to feed them all.

Amhra is divorced with six small children. She struggles to provide for her family with a part-time job. She would like to get full-time employment, but can't afford the day-care expense. Just filling the basics of food and clothing is a challenge. There will be no extras for Christmas without help.

Xavier is a 36-year-old father of three. His wife has had to support the family for the past three years while he struggled to escape drug addiction. The family is back on track but finding it difficult to meet financial obligations. Without some charitable assistance the holidays will be bleak.

Chet is a 57-year-old single man caring for the four small children of his girlfriend, who is losing her battle with cancer. He does his best to see to their needs, but asks for food vouchers and medication for the children.

Marshall is staying at a homeless shelter. He needs a bus pass in order to go on job interviews.

Theresa was in a hit-and-run accident. She's unable to work and has been waiting for several weeks to collect disability. Her rent is behind and her landlord is threatening eviction. She needs help until the insurance comes through.

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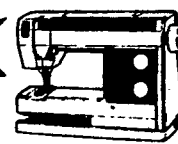
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