

‘PREPARING FOR CHRISTMAS THIS YEAR’

~ FOUR QUESTIONS ~

3<sup>rd</sup> SUNDAY OF ADVENT 2019

POPE FRANCIS & 2019 VATICAN CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Pope Francis recently [addressed the people preparing for the 2019 Christmas Concert](#) at the Vatican.

Below are some of Francis reflections to which I have added local questions for our parish family.

FOUR QUESTIONS FOR OUR PARISH FAMILY

1. *What is the yearning in my heart, my thirst as I prepare for Christmas?*

*The time before Christmas calls us to ask ourselves: what is it that I am waiting for in my life? What is the great desire of my heart? You too, with your songs, help awaken or reawaken this healthy human “yearning” in the hearts of many people. Deep down, it is God himself who puts this desire, this “thirst” in our hearts. And he comes to meet us by this route. Certainly not in the vain compulsion to acquire possessions or to keep up appearances. It is not there that God comes; no one will meet on that route. But surely he comes wherever there is hunger and thirst for peace, hunger and thirst for justice, freedom and love.*



2. *As I gaze at the Christmas Crib, what message do I receive?*



*Once more this year, in the footsteps of Saint Francis of Assisi, I asked everyone to see in the nativity scene a simple and admirable sign of the mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God.*

*“The nativity scene clearly teaches that we cannot let ourselves be fooled by wealth and fleeting promises of happiness... By being born in a manger, God himself launches the only true revolution that can give hope and dignity to the disinherited and the outcast: the revolution of love, the revolution of tenderness. From the manger, Jesus proclaims, in a meek yet powerful way, the*

*need for sharing with the poor as the path to a more human and fraternal world in which no one is excluded or marginalized ([Admirabile Signum](#), 6).*

3. *How do I use my creative gifts to make a difference in our world?*

*For this reason, all of us are called to build a “global village of education”, weaving a web of human relationships, for these are the best antidote to all forms of discrimination, violence and bullying. In this village, education and art meet through the languages of music and poetry, painting and sculpture, theatre and cinema. All these expressions of human creativity can be channels of fraternity and peace between the peoples that make up the human family, and of dialogue between the world’s religions. In this regard, I express my grateful appreciation to the Salesians and to Scholas Occurrentes for the commitment with which, in this spirit of service, they carry out their projects in the Amazon.*



4. *How do I thank our parish musicians, choirs and organisers who prepare our Christmas Carols, Masses and Concerts this year?*



*Dear artists, I thank you for all that you do. I wish you the best for your activities and your spiritual growth.*

*May your hearts melt before the mystery of Christmas, so that you can convey some of that same tenderness to those who listen to you.*

*Thank you and best wishes for your concert!*

Let us pray.

Fr Gerry

[Readings: <https://universalis.com/20191215/mass.htm>]