

Fourth Sunday of Advent, December 18, 2022

## Scripture Reading: Matthew 1:18-25

*How many observe Christ's birthday! How few, his precepts!*  
—Benjamin Franklin



### The Legend of the Poinsettia

The poinsettia is a plant from Mexico. It is known for its red and green foliage and is used primarily during the Advent season for floral displays. It is also known as the Christmas Eve Flower. The star-like leaf pattern is said to resemble the Star of Bethlehem (Christmas Star). The red color of its leaves symbolize the blood of Jesus Christ and his crucifixion on the cross. The Aztecs would use it for red dye and even an antipyretic medicine (fever reducer).

A charming story is told of Pepita, a poor Mexican girl who had no gift to present the Christ Child at Christmas Eve services. As Pepita walked slowly to the chapel with her cousin Pedro, her heart was filled with sadness rather than joy.

“I am sure, Pepita, that even the most humble gift, if given in love, will be acceptable in His eyes,” said Pedro consolingly.

Not knowing what else to do, Pepita knelt by the roadside and gathered a handful of common weeds, fashioning them into a small bouquet. Looking at the scraggly bunch of weeds, she felt more saddened and embarrassed than ever by the humbleness of her offering. She fought back a tear as she entered the small village chapel.

As she approached the altar, she remembered Pedro’s kind words: “Even the most humble gift, if given in love, will be acceptable in his eyes.” She felt her spirits lift as she knelt to lay the bouquet at the foot of the nativity scene.

Suddenly, the bouquet of weeds burst into blooms of brilliant red, and all who saw them were certain that they had witnessed a Christmas miracle right before their eyes.

From that day on, the bright red flowers were known as the *Flores de Noche Buena*, or Flowers of the Holy Night, for they bloomed each year during the Christmas season.

Today, the common name for this plant is the poinsettia!

—Various internet sources.

*Prayer: Savior of the world, thank you for the gift of salvation made possible by your birth and your life poured out on Calvary's cross. May I live in such a way that your life will not be given in vain. Amen.*

*Wishing you God's love on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent,  
Love & Pastor Ben Note*

**Daily Bible Readings**

**Sunday:** Proverbs 15-18

**Monday:** Proverbs 19-21

**Tuesday:** Proverbs 22-24

**Wednesday:** Proverbs 25-28

**Thursday:** Proverbs 29-31

**Friday:** Ecclesiastes 1-3

**Saturday:** Ecclesiastes 4-6

**FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT**



**DASH TO THE FINISH!**

**Directions:** Complete the dashes to make five words. Clues for these words — in no particular order — are: baby, flower, Monday, total breakdown, indicator.

\_\_ \_ L T D \_\_ \_ \_

\_\_ \_ G N P \_\_ \_ \_

\_\_ \_ X G L \_\_ \_ \_

\_\_ \_ F S P \_\_ \_ \_

\_\_ \_ E K D \_\_ \_

**FIND THE WORD!**

If you start at the correct square, and move from square to adjoining square, and using all the letters, you will find a musical instrument.

G	C	E	N
O	L	K	S
L	E	I	P

**Answers: Dash to the Finish.**  
 meltdown,  
 signpost,  
 foxglove,  
 offspring,  
 weekday.

**Find the Word!**  
 Glockenspiel

“For unto us is born this day in the city of David, a Savior, who is Christ the Lord!” —Luke 2:11