

NATIVITY OF THE LORD

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 1:14



St. Jerome Catholic Church

2018



To become a child in relation to God is the condition for entering the kingdom. For this, we must humble ourselves and become little. Even more: to become "children of God" we must be "born from above" or "born of God". Only when Christ is formed in us will the mystery of Christmas be fulfilled in us. Christmas is the mystery of this "marvelous exchange": O marvelous exchange! Man's Creator has become man, born of the Virgin. We have been made sharers in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share our humanity. #526 Catechism of the Catholic Church

Dear Friends:

On the day of our Lord's birth, let us rejoice in His life, believe in His love, and celebrate His promise. You and your loved ones will be remembered in our Masses throughout the Christmas Season.

Respectfully yours in Christ,

*Fr. Tom Morgan, Pastor
Fr. Robert Cadrecha, Parochial Vicar
Msgr. Brendan Muldoon, Pastor Emeritus
Fr. Gregory Reisert, O.F.M. Cap., Assisting
Msgr. Dacian Dee, Assisting
Deacon Fred Kunder, Permanent Deacon
Sr. Lucia Brady, O.S.C., Pastoral Assistant
and the Staff of St. Jerome Catholic Church
and St. Jerome Early Childhood Center*



THE PROCLAMATION OF THE BIRTH OF CHRIST

Today, the twenty-fifth day of December, unknown ages from the time when God created the heavens and the earth and then formed man and woman in his own image.

Several thousand years after the flood, when God made the rainbow shine forth as a sign of the covenant.

Twenty-one centuries from the time of Abraham and Sarah; thirteen centuries after Moses led the people of Israel out of Egypt.

Eleven hundred years from the time of Ruth and the Judges; one thousand years from the anointing of David as king; in the sixty-fifth week according to the prophecy of Daniel.

In the one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad; the seven hundred and fifty second year from the foundation of the city of Rome.

The forty-second year of the reign of Octavian Augustus; the whole world being at peace, Jesus Christ, eternal God and Son of the eternal Father, desiring to sanctify the world by his most merciful coming, being conceived by the Holy Spirit, and nine months having passed since his conception, was born in Bethlehem of Judea of the Virgin Mary.

Today is the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ according to the flesh.

Conscious Active Participation at Mass:

Ideas for Catholic Prayer and Reflection at Mass

Do some homework.

The more we know about the Mass, the more we can feel a part of it and appreciate it. Obtain a book such as *The How-to Book of the Mass* (Michael Dubriel, Our Sunday Visitor), which explains the meaning behind different parts of the Mass.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church has very rich sections on liturgy, the paschal mystery, and the Mass. Read especially nos. 1066-1209; and 1322-1419.

Question & Mission of the Week:

Question:

How are you responding to Jesus' invitation to spiritual childhood?

Mission:

In this season of gift giving, remember to give love. Give love in warm presence, kind attention, sympathetic listening. Give love in patience and forgiveness. Give love so that you can become love.

Reflections from the Holy Father, Pope Francis

"A holy day has dawned upon us. Come you nations and adore the Lord.

For today a great light has come upon the earth."

(Day Mass of Christmas, Gospel Acclamation)

Dear Brothers and Sisters! "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light" (Is 9:1). This prophecy of Isaiah never ceases to touch us, especially when we hear it proclaimed in the liturgy of Christmas Night. This is not simply an emotional or sentimental matter. It moves us because it states the deep reality of what we are: a people who walk, and all around us – and within us as well – there is darkness and light. In this night, as the spirit of darkness enfolds the world, there takes place anew the event which always amazes and surprises us: the people who walk see a great light. A light which makes us reflect on this mystery: the mystery of walking and seeing.

In our personal history too, there are both bright and dark moments, lights and shadows. If we love God and our brothers and sisters, we walk in the light; but if our heart is closed, if we are dominated by pride, deceit, self-seeking, then darkness falls within us and around us. "Whoever hates his brother – writes the Apostle John – is in the darkness; he walks in the darkness, and does not know the way to go, because the darkness has blinded his eyes" (1 Jn 2:11). A people who walk, but as a pilgrim people who do not want to go astray.

On this night, like a burst of brilliant light, there rings out the proclamation of the Apostle:

The shepherds were the first to see this "tent", to receive the news of Jesus' birth. They were the first because they were among the last, the outcast. And they were the first because they were awake, keeping watch in the night, guarding their flocks. The pilgrim is bound by duty to keep watch and the shepherds did just that. Together with them, let us pause before the Child, let us pause in silence. Together with them, let us thank the Lord for having given Jesus to us, and with them let us raise from the depths of our hearts the praises of his fidelity: We bless you, Lord God most high, who lowered yourself for our sake. You are immense, and you made yourself small; you are rich and

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light" (Is 9:1)

Walking. This verb makes us reflect on the course of history, that long journey which is the history of salvation, starting with Abraham, our father in faith, whom the Lord called one day to set out, to go forth from his country towards the land which he would show him. From that time on, our identity as believers has been that of a people making its pilgrim way towards the promised land. This history has always been accompanied by the Lord! He is ever faithful to his covenant and to his promises. Because he is faithful, "God is light, and in him there is no darkness at all" (1 Jn 1:5). Yet on the part of the people there are times of both light and darkness, fidelity and infidelity, obedience, and rebellion; times of being a pilgrim people and times of being a people adrift.

"God's grace has been revealed, and it has made salvation possible for the whole human race" (Tit 2:11).

The grace which was revealed in our world is Jesus, born of the Virgin Mary, true man and true God. He has entered our history; he has shared our journey. He came to free us from darkness and to grant us light. In him was revealed the grace, the mercy, and the tender love of the Father: Jesus is Love incarnate. He is not simply a teacher of wisdom, he is not an ideal for which we strive while knowing that we are hopelessly distant from it. He is the meaning of life and history, who has pitched his tent in our midst.

you made yourself poor; you are all-powerful and you made yourself vulnerable.

On this night let us share the joy of the Gospel: God loves us, he so loves us that he gave us his Son to be our brother, to be light in our darkness. To us the Lord repeats: "Do not be afraid!" (Lk 2:10). As the angels said to the shepherds: "Do not be afraid!". And I also repeat to all of you: Do not be afraid! Our Father is patient, he loves us, he gives us Jesus to guide us on the way which leads to the promised land. Jesus is the light who brightens the darkness. He is mercy: our Father always forgives us. He is our peace. Amen.

SOLEMNITY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE LORD
HOMILY OF POPE FRANCIS, Vatican Basilica
Tuesday, 24 December 2013

Illuminatio



Celebrating the Octave of Christmas

Purpose: To give Jesus gifts of service on Christmas and for the seven days following, in gratitude and acknowledgement that he is the light of the world which we are called to share with others.

Illuminatio defined: "the act of illuminating; a lighting up; enlightening; glory"
Items needed: Candelabra with 9 candles (candelabra can be homemade using tissue paper for the flames) Bible

Gift Ideas: The gifts of service for Jesus can be completed individually or as a family or group. If you are praying the *Illuminatio* with your family or another group, discuss any reflection questions given and develop the service/gift ideas together. Suggestions for gifts are listed below the daily reading.

Hymn: "We are the Light of the World" (refrain only)*
We are the light of the world, may our light shine before all, that they may see the good that we do, and give glory to God.

*If praying with small children, you can sing "This Little Light of Mine" instead.

Readings: If praying the *Illuminatio* with a group or with your family, you may want to choose a different leader and reader each day.

Day One—Christmas Day, December 25th—The Day of Remembering

- Candle Lighting:** *Light the candle in the center of the candelabra.*
- Leader:** Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.
- All:** Yes, Jesus, we believe you are really here.
- Hymn:** "We are the Light of the World" (see Introduction)
- Leader:** This center candle represents the constant presence of Jesus, the light who came into the world, in our lives.
- Light the candle on the far right of the candelabra.*
- Leader:** This candle represents the light of knowledge of Jesus. Today, we reflect on the example of the shepherds who shared the light of the knowledge of Jesus' birth with others.
- Scripture Reading:** Luke 2:1-18 (passage is read from the Bible)
- Reflect/Discuss:** What do you think about God's gift of Jesus as the light of the world? How has Jesus been a light in your life? Who has been a reflection of Jesus' light in your life?
- Gift for Jesus:** Today, share the Good News of Jesus' birth with somebody.
- Here are some ideas (choose one): Call a friend or relative you have not talked to in a while and wish him/her a Merry Christmas. Take a birthday cake for Jesus to a nursing home or to a homebound/elderly neighbor. Celebrate Jesus' birthday by singing Happy Birthday.



Candles are extinguished at the end of the discussion.

Day Two—December 26th—The Gift of Forgiveness and Reconciliation

- Candle Lighting:** *Light the candle in the center of the candelabra and the two candles on the far right side of the candelabra. (3 candles should be lit)*
- Leader:** Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.
- All:** Yes, Jesus, we believe you are really here.
- Hymn:** "We are the Light of the World" (see Introduction)
- Leader:** This candle represents the light of Jesus' love and forgiveness.
- Leader:** Today, we reflect on Jesus' desire that we forgive one another and that we seek forgiveness when we hurt others. Jesus gives us the perfect example of how to forgive and love and he asks us to follow his example.
- Scripture Reading:** John 17:20-21 & Matthew 5:23-24 (passages are read from the Bible)
- Reflect/Discuss:** When has it been difficult to forgive somebody? Has somebody ever refused to forgive you? Do you apologize when you hurt somebody, or do you just wait for the person to "get over it"? How can you be a more loving and forgiving person?
- Gift for Jesus:** Today, seek to forgive or be forgiven.

Here are some ideas (choose one): If you have been hurt by somebody, even if they are, pray now for the ability to forgive. If you have hurt somebody with your words, actions, or lack of attention, seek forgiveness from this person today. Apologize, in person, by phone, or with a letter. Allow the love of Jesus and his example of forgiveness to enter your heart.

Candles are extinguished at the end of the discussion.

Day Three—December 27th—The Gift of Meeting the Needs of the Least Ones

Candle Lighting: *Light the previously lit candles and an additional candle on the far right side of the candelabra. (4 candles should be lit)*

Leader: Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.

All: Yes, Jesus, we believe you are really here.

Hymn: “*We are the Light of the World*” (see Introduction)

Leader: This candle represents Jesus' special love and care for the poor, the sick, and the lonely.

Leader: Today, we reflect on the call we have to reach out to those in need, those who are considered Jesus' least ones.

Scripture Reading: Matthew 5:31-40 (passages are read from the Bible)

Reflect/Discuss: Who are the "least ones" (the hungry and thirsty, the strangers, the sick, the imprisoned or lonely) in your life? How have you helped those who are in need? Describe a time when you were in need and somebody helped you.

Gift for Jesus: Today, help to fulfill the needs of one of Jesus' "least ones."

Here are some ideas (choose one): Visit somebody who is new to your neighborhood. Volunteer at Lifeline Ministries, Feed the Homeless Ministry, etc. Visit a sick friend or family member; take something that will comfort him/her. Visit a homebound elderly person or somebody in a nursing home. Collect food for the monthly Lifeline Ministry Sunday food drive. Make donations to the Diocesan prison ministry.

Candles are extinguished at the end of the discussion.

Day Four—December 28th—The Gift of Meeting the Needs of the Least Ones

Candle Lighting: *Light the previously lit candles and all candles on the right side of the candelabra. (5 candles should be lit)*

Leader: Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.

All: Yes, Jesus, we believe you are really here.

Hymn: “*We are the Light of the World*” (see Introduction)

Leader: This candle represents Jesus' dedication to seeking out the lost and alienated.

Leader: Today, we reflect on the call we have to reach out to those who are alienated from the Catholic faith.

Scripture Reading: Luke 15:1-7, Luke 19:10, & James 5:19-20 (passages are read from the Bible)

Reflect/Discuss: Have you ever felt separated from the Church? Do you know somebody who has been hurt by other members of the Church? How can you reach out to this person? Do you know somebody who may be interested in knowing more about Jesus?

Gift for Jesus: Today, reach out to someone who may feel alienated from the Church.

Here are some ideas (choose one): Invite somebody to go to Mass with you. This might be somebody who is Catholic but has not been to Mass in a while. Offer to listen and give comfort to someone who has been hurt or alienated by someone in the Church. Seek out somebody who may be interested in knowing more about Jesus and share your faith with them. Write a card or letter to a person who might fit any of the descriptions above.

Candles are extinguished at the end of the discussion.

Day Five—December 29th—The Gift of Sharing the Word and Teaching of Jesus

Candle Lighting: *Light the previously lit candles and the candle on the far left side of the candelabra (6 candles should be lit)*

Leader: Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.

All: Yes, Jesus, we believe you are really here.

Hymn: “*We are the Light of the World*” (see Introduction)

Leader: This candle represents Jesus' offer of salvation to all people.

- Leader:** Today, we reflect on the call we have to share the Faith we have received.
- Scripture Reading:** Mark 16:15, Matthew 5:19, Matthew 28:19, & 1 Timothy 4:13 (passages are read from the Bible)
- Reflect/Discuss:** Did you know that EVERY Christian has been given the responsibility to teach others about Jesus and to share his Word? How well are you living out this responsibility? How could you improve? If somebody knew nothing of Jesus, what could you teach this person?
- Gift for Jesus:** Today, share the Good News of Jesus Christ with someone.

Here are some ideas (choose one): With your family, discuss the readings for this Sunday's Mass. Send a note or card to someone, and include a Scripture quote. Read and discuss paragraphs 783-786 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church. Talk about what it means to share in Jesus' ministry as priest, prophet and king. Invite somebody to pray with you/your family.

Candles are extinguished at the end of the discussion.

Day Six – December 30th – The Gift of Unity

- Candle Lighting:** *Light the previously lit candles and the two candles on the far left side of the candelabra. (7 candles should be lit)*
- Leader:** Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.
- All:** Yes, Jesus, we believe you are really here.
- Hymn:** “*We are the Light of the World*” (see Introduction)
- Leader:** This candle represents Jesus' desire for unity among all peoples.
- Leader:** Today, we reflect on the call we have to work for unity.
- Scripture Reading:** John 17:20-22 & Psalm 133: 1-3 (passages are read from the Bible)
- Reflect/Discuss:** How can you tell if a family or group is united? How can you tell if they are NOT united? What can you do to be more united with members of your family? What can different religious groups, ethnic groups, or races do to be more united?
- Gift for Jesus:** Today, demonstrate Jesus' desire for unity among all peoples.

Here are some ideas (choose one): With your family, work together to complete some goal you have been wanting to accomplish. Spend time in a fun family discussion getting to know one another better. One way to do this is to talk about favorites and wishes, hopes, and dreams. Attend a religious service other than our own with a friend. Then invite the friend to attend Mass with you. Invite a non-Catholic friend to dinner and seek to learn more about his/her faith. Point out common beliefs and practices. The goal is to grow in appreciation and knowledge of his/her faith while sharing ours.

Candles are extinguished at the end of the discussion.

Day Seven – December 31st – The Gift of Prayer

- Candle Lighting:** *Light the previously lit candles and the three candles on the far left side of the candelabra. (8 candles should be lit)*
- Leader:** Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.
- All:** Yes, Jesus, we believe you are really here.
- Hymn:** “*We are the Light of the World*” (see Introduction)
- Leader:** This candle represents Jesus' gift of teaching us to pray.
- Leader:** Today, we reflect on the call to pray always.
- Scripture Reading:** Matthew 18:19 (passages are read from the Bible)
- Reflect/Discuss:** Is prayer an important part of your life? Explain. When do you most feel the need to pray? Have you ever had an experience in your life when you knew people were praying for you? What did this mean to you? Do you think it was helpful? Have you ever prayed for others in their times of need? Do you often thank and praise God through prayer? Why or Why not?
- Gift for Jesus:** Today, reach out to somebody who is in need of prayer.



Here are some ideas (choose one): If someone asks you to pray with him/her, say a prayer on the spot. Ask someone who is hurting if you can pray for him/her. Commit to praying for this person regularly. With your family, go through the newspaper or watch the news and pray for those in need of prayer. Invite friends and family over to pray together for the needs of those gathered. Send a note or card to a friend or family member. Include a prayer you have written for that person.

Candles are extinguished at the end of the discussion.

Day Eight—January 1st – The Gift of Resolve

- Candle Lighting:** *Light the all the candles on the candelabra. (9 candles should be lit)*
- Leader:** Let us remember we are in the holy presence of God.
- All:** Yes, Jesus, we believe you are really here.
- Hymn:** “*We are the Light of the World*” (see Introduction)
- Leader:** This candle represents Jesus' promise to be with us always.
- Leader:** Today, we resolve, or commit, to being a light in the world. We remember that Jesus is always present with us to guide us and to help us.
- Scripture Reading:** Matthew 28: 18-20 (passages are read from the Bible)
- Reflect/Discuss:** Discuss all the ways you can individually, and/or as a family, be a light in the world? What gift (s) during these 8 days were the most meaningful to you? Why? What gifts can you commit to making a more regular part of your life?
- Gift for Jesus:** Today, resolve and commit!

Here are some ideas (choose one): Make a family or individual plan to keep living as light(s) in the world. Write it down and post it where it can be seen regularly. Begin keeping a journal. Each day record how you were a light in the world that day. Ask others to help you during times that it is difficult to be a light in the world. Choose one of the gifts you gave Jesus during these eight days to especially focus on in this coming year.

Candles are extinguished at the end of the discussion.

Final Prayer

After each petition, blow out one candle. Extinguish the center candle last.

- Leader:** Our response is, "Lord, help me to be a light in the world."
- All:** Lord, help me to be a light in the world.
- Leader:** May we keep the spirit of Christmas alive in our hearts and continue to share the Good News of the Light who came into the world, we pray to the Lord.
- All:** Lord, help me to be a light in the world.

BLOW OUT THE FIRST CANDLE

- Leader:** May we always seek to forgive and to be forgiven, becoming true peacemakers in the world, we pray to the Lord.

BLOW OUT THE SECOND CANDLE

- Leader:** May we always seek to feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, welcome the stranger, clothe the naked, comfort the ill, and visit those who are lonely or imprisoned, we pray to the Lord.

BLOW OUT THE THIRD CANDLE

- Leader:** May we always seek out the lost, the hurt, and the alienated, we pray to the Lord.

BLOW OUT THE FOURTH CANDLE

- Leader:** May we always seek to live out our mission as disciples to share the Good News, we pray to the Lord.

BLOW OUT THE FIFTH CANDLE

- Leader:** May we always seek to recognize each and every person as a child of God and encourage unity in our homes, our communities, and among all peoples, we pray to the Lord.

BLOW OUT THE SIXTH CANDLE

- Leader:** May we always seek to foster a spirit of prayer in our lives by praying frequently with and for others, we pray to the Lord.

BLOW OUT THE SEVENTH CANDLE

- Leader:** May we always remember that Jesus has promised to be with us forever to guide us and help us live as lights in the world, we pray to the Lord.

BLOW OUT THE EIGHTH CANDLE

- Leader:** Jesus told us, "the gift you have received, give as a gift." (Matthew 10:8) May we always seek to share with others the blessings and gifts we have received from Jesus, we pray to the Lord.

BLOW OUT THE CENTER AND LAST CANDLE

Special Note: It is our hope that *Illuminatio* will grow into a family tradition of giving back to our Lord. May each of you help to make this hope a reality of gifts to God.

Illuminatio



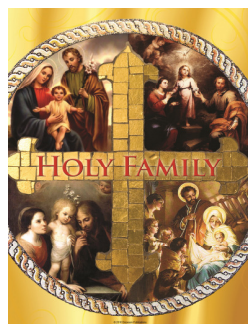
We are delighted you have come to worship with us at St. Jerome Parish this Christmas.



Welcome!

If you would like to explore becoming a more active member of the Catholic Community here at St. Jerome, please consider attending 'Come Home for Christmas.' This is a program especially for Catholics who, for various reasons, rarely or no longer attend Mass. Whatever your story or journey, the door is open for you. At your own pace and in your own time, we'd be interested to hear your story and learn from your experiences. You are an important and much-loved member of the body of Christ. For more information, contact Sr. Lucia Brady (727-410-1175 or

bradyl@tampabay.rr.com) or call the parish office 727-595-4610.



Christmas Daily Prayer With the Holy Family:

Blessed Joseph, my strength and guide, Holy Mary, my inspiration and model, Lord Jesus, child of hope, joy and peace, watch over me, bless me today, and every day of this season of grace. Amen.

Household Table Prayer for the Christmas Season:

Come, let us adore him.
Come, let us adore him.

Today we celebrate your birth, O Christ,
as your glory fills the world with light.
May this meal strengthen us
to be a light for others.

Come, let us adore him.
We hear the herald angels sing
of God's peace on earth.
May the food of this table nourish us
to live the good news of peace.

Come, let us adore him.
The Lord has come to us,
the Word of God in human flesh!
Bless this meal,
bless our lives
during these joyful
Christmas days.
Amen.



Bulletin Announcements in Brief

The Gift Shop is closed on Christmas Day.

There is no **Coffee & Donuts** on Christmas Day.

Faith Formation classes and **Youth Ministry** will break for the Christmas holidays. All will resume the week of January 6th.

Alcoholics Anonymous: AA Open Sessions are held at St. Jerome in the Ed Kilroy Building on Mondays and Fridays at 8:00pm. Closed sessions for existing members are held on Tuesdays.

Al-Anon: Al-Anon family group meetings take place on Mondays from 1:00pm to 2:15pm in the Ed Kilroy Building.

Bingo: Bingo resumes on January 3rd. Bingo is a fun, social and good time every Thursday in the Parish Center. Doors open at 10am. Early bird begins at 12pm followed by the regular games, ending around 3pm. There is blood pressure screening at Bingo every Thursday from 11am to 1:30pm by our resident nurse.

Daily Rosary: The Holy Rosary is prayed Monday through Saturday at 7:30am in the Holy Family Chapel.

Weekly Rosary: The Holy Rosary is prayed every Wednesday at 7pm in the Holy Family Chapel for Vocations to the Priesthood & Religious Life.

Scripture Rosary: A Scripture Rosary is said on the second Wednesday of every month at 7pm in the Holy Family Chapel.

Morning Prayer: You are welcome to join us for Morning Prayer in the Liturgy of the Hours Monday through Friday at 8:40am.

Mother of Perpetual Help Novena: The Mother of Perpetual Help Novena is held every Saturday at 8:45 am.

Confessions are held every Saturday from 3pm to 3:45pm in the Holy Family Chapel.

Griefshare resumes January 3rd. Beginning again on January 4th, bereavement meetings are every Thursday in the Education Building from 10:00am to 11:30am and open to all. For info call Nancy Selak at 727- 415-8742.

Bethlehem Centre ... Classes resume January 2nd

Art (Watercolor) Tu, Fr 10am - 2pm Bridge Tu, Fr 12pm - 3pm Hall; Exercise Tu, Fr 9am - 10am Hall; Line Dancing Fr 10:30am - 11:30am Hall; Pinochle Tu, Fr 12pm - 3:30pm Lounge; Spanish Class Tu 10am - 11am Rm 8; Tai Chi Tu 10:30am - 11:30am Hall; Yoga We/Fr 10:30am - 11:45am Lounge; Zumba We 9:30am - 10:30am Hall. The Bethlehem Centre invites all of our senior parishioners and friends to join in the activities listed above in the Education Building. All are invited to join us weekly for a delicious lunch every Tuesday in the Parish Center from 11:30am - 12pm. Donation \$6. For more info on classes or to register, please call Joanne Biamonte at 727-596-9394. Classes resume January 7th.



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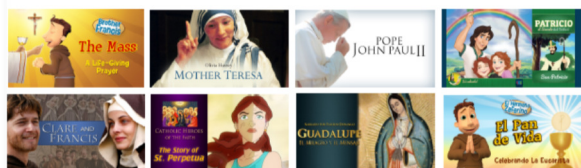
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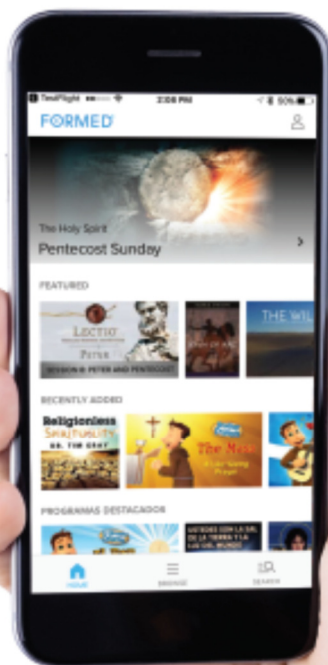
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