



Winter, 2019-2020

Advent

Advent is a period of preparation for the coming of the Lord that is observed in the Catholic Church every year shortly before the arrival of Christmas. During Advent we are reminded to prepare ourselves to be worthy to celebrate the anniversary of the coming of the Lord into the world as the incarnate God of love, and thus to make our souls an abode for the Redeemer who is coming in Holy Communion and through grace, thereby preparing ourselves for His final coming as a judge, at death or at the final judgment.

No one quite knows exactly when the celebration of Advent began, although it was certainly no sooner than the birth of Christ. There are some vague references to Advent as far back as 380 A.D. It was originally held over five Sundays, but the number was reduced to four Sundays by Pope St. Gregory VII in the eleventh century.

The word Advent comes from the Latin word *ad-venio*, meaning “to come to.” Since 1907 it is a period beginning on the Sunday closest to the feast of St. Andrew the Apostle (November 30); and so, it begins no sooner than November 27 and no later than December 3. Thus, it lasts from 21 to 28 days.

During Advent the celebrant and sacred ministers use violet vestments, with some exceptions – for example, on the third Sunday of Advent, rose-colored vestments may be worn. Flowers and relics of the saints are not to be placed on the altars or the organ during the Office and Masses at this time, but again, there are exceptions. There is quite a bit of symbolism during the four Sundays of Advent, much of it related to the coming of the Savior.
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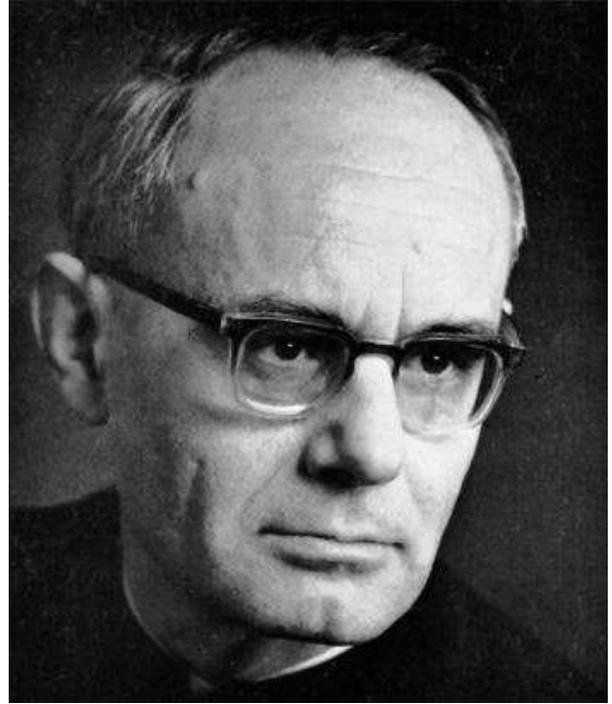
Karl Rahner, S.J. (1904-1984)

Karl Rahner was a Jesuit priest and theologian from Germany who is regarded as one of the most influential Roman Catholic theologians of the 20th century, along with Hans Urs von Balthasar, Henri de Lubac, and Yves Congar.

Karl was the fourth of seven children, the son of a college professor and a very religious mother. He was born on March 5, 1904 in Freiburg in Breisgau, Grand Duchy of Baden, German Empire. In 1922 he entered the Jesuit seminary as his brother Hugo had done previously. He studied the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola and thus began his formation in Ignatian spirituality. He became familiar with the thinking of the Fathers of the Church, particularly in the areas of spirituality, mysticism, grace, and the sacraments.

In 1934 Karl Rahner went to the University of Freiburg where he studied philosophy with Martin Heidegger, who became a strong influence on his thought. Rahner's dissertation taught that the human search for meaning was rooted in the unlimited horizon of God's own being, experienced within the world. Rahner's advisor was Martin Honecker, who refused to approve it. Rahner moved to the Jesuit University in Innsbruck and then completed a dissertation in theology in 1937. He moved to Innsbruck as a World War was looming and taught there until it was overtaken by the Nazis in 1939. He spent the war years in Vienna, teaching and doing pastoral work. Following the conclusion of the Second World War he moved back to Innsbruck to teach, then to Munich and Munster for more of the same, until his retirement in 1971. He never really retired though, continuing with his lecturing,

writing, and pastoral duties in Innsbruck and Munich until his death.



Karl Rahner, S.J.

When some of his students were asked for comments about studying under Rahner and working with him on a variety of projects, they described him as very concerned about them, a simple man, pious, and very much involved with helping those who were in need, and as a kind man who spent much time as a spiritual director and advisor. He kept in touch with Jesuit missions in foreign countries, helping to provide food, clothing, housing and money for those in need. He once raised money to provide a motorcycle for a priest working at a mission in Africa.

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Karl Rahner, S.J.

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Pope John Paul XXIII appointed Karl Rahner as a *peritus*, or official theologian, for the Second Vatican Council in 1962, which led to his thoughts being very influential on the Council. During the Council, Rahner worked with Joseph Ratzinger (who later became Pope Benedict XVI) in the preparation of an alternate text on the relationship between Scripture and Tradition that was accepted by the German bishops. In later years Rahner and Ratzinger would disagree on the direction of some of what Rahner had written. The German Jesuit later served as an advisor to Cardinal Koenig in Vienna on the Vatican Council documents.

"Love alone allows man to forget himself... it alone can still redeem even the darkest hours of the past since it alone finds the courage to believe in the mercy of the holy God."

— Karl Rahner, S.J.

Karl Rahner was a great thinker, philosopher, and theologian as well as a prolific writer, with close to 4,000 written works as a writer or editor, many of them essays. Among these are

Theological Investigations (23 volumes), *Lexicon of Theology and the Church* (10 volumes, co-written with Josef Höfer), *Encyclopedia of Theology: The Concise Sacramentum Mundi* (6 volumes), and *Christian Faith in Modern Society* (a 30-volume encyclopedia). His *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity*, co-written with William V. Dych, is a very developed, systematic compilation and *Prayers and Meditations: An Anthology of the Spiritual Writings by Karl Rahner* is an excellent, scholarly collection of his retreats and prayers which reveal his pastoral concerns. Rahner's ideas are presented in a simplified format by Donald Gelpi in his *Life and Light: A Guide to the Theology of Karl Rahner*.

Rahner put much of his faith in the teachings of Ignatius of Loyola and believed strongly in working to see God in all things. As he reached his later years, he was overcome by illness and exhaustion. He died a peaceful death in the University Medical Clinic of Innsbruck on March 30, 1984 and is buried at the Jesuit Church of the Holy Trinity in Innsbruck. △

Upcoming Events

The Bridges Foundation schedules its **Annual Meeting** every year in February. The 2020 meeting will be on Saturday, February 15 from 12:15 to 3:00 p.m., immediately following the Magis session on that same day, at Webster Groves Christian Church, 1320 W. Lockwood Avenue in Webster Groves. The *Bridges Annual Report* will be available. All are invited and lunch will be provided. In order to obtain a count of the attendance for those who are providing the food, please RSVP to Linda Leib at 314-313-8283 or linda.leib@bridgesfoundation.org.

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Upcoming Events

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The Bridges **Marketplace Spirituality Retreat** will be held at the Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet Retreat and Provincial House, 6400 Minnesota Avenue, St. Louis 63111 on April 3 & 4, 2020. This year's director is Mark McKenzie, S.J.

Participation is reserved for those who have received the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola. The registration fee for the event is \$45 but there is no charge for current retreatants and current prayer companions. A limited number of rooms (if desired), either single or double, are available for an overnight stay on April 3rd but must be reserved. Registration is now open and will remain so until March 25. Further information and a link to the online registration form can be found at <http://bridgesfoundation.org/programs/marketplace-spirituality-retreat/>.

The **Ignatian Community Retreat** will be held this summer on July 17 & 18, 2020 at the Sisters of St. Joseph Retreat and Provincial House, 6400 Minnesota Avenue, St. Louis 63111. All are invited to attend. The cost is \$70 and online registration is open from now until July 8. A limited number of rooms, if desired, must be reserved, and are available for an overnight stay on July 17.

J. Michael Sparough, S.J. is to serve as retreat director this year. He is the Spiritual Director at Bellarmine Jesuit Retreat House in Barrington, Illinois. Fr. Sparough holds a Doctor of Ministry degree from St. Mary of the Lake in Mundelein, Illinois as well as an MFA from the Yale School of Drama. He is the founder of Charis, a national Jesuit retreat ministry for young

adults, and has written and spoken extensively on prayer. Along with Jim Manney and Tim Hippskind, S.J. he is the co-author of *What's Your Decision?: How to Make Choices with Confidence and Clarity: An Ignatian Approach to Decision Making*.

Further information as well as a link to the online registration form can be found on the Bridges website at <http://bridgesfoundation.org/programs/ignatian-community-retreat/>. Δ



Wishing you and your family a wonderful Christmas season, and may you be blessed with good health, prosperity, and happiness in the new coming year.

This is the newsletter of the Bridges Foundation of St. Louis. The newsletter is published quarterly and distributed as a PDF file via email, free to anyone who would like to receive it. Thank you to the contributor to this issue, Tom Simon.

Quarterly issues are sent late in the months of March, June, September, and December. The deadline for submission of material is on the 15th day of each of those months for inclusion in the issue to be mailed later that month. Look for your next issue around the time that the seasons change.

The deadline for submissions to the next issue of the Bridges Newsletter is March 15, 2020. Please send articles, letters, mailing list additions and deletions, and other correspondence to: Tom Simon, Editor, 1730 Derrynane, Manchester, MO 63021, or by email to tsimon@tsimon.com.