

# Finding Christ in a Simpler Christmas

Our St. James' Vision includes a calling to **simplify** our parish and personal lives; increase opportunities to **connect** with God and one another; and to take good **care** of what God has entrusted to us.

As the Personal Finance Ministry considered this calling – we felt the coming holiday season was the right time to begin acting on the Vision by publishing a series of notes in upcoming service leaflets to present ideas on simplifying Christmas, how to recognize Christ in our ordinary seasonal scenes and activities, and to provide links via our webpage to help you and your family “Find Christ in a Simpler Christmas.”

## ***Idea #1 – Reset Expectations***

There are many authors and sources of inspiration on this topic. But nearly all start with similar advice: Change your expectations. Consciously plan and agree with your family and loved ones that you will celebrate differently – and more deliberately this year.

*The Hundred Dollar Holiday* (McKibben, 1998) advocates setting a budget – at something less than what we spent last year – as the best method to bring our most creative ideas to the fore. *Unplug the Christmas Machine* (Robinson & Staeheli, 1991) offers a Christmas Pledge to help guide our prayers for considering the Christmas we want for 2010.

## ***Put it Into Action***

During the coming weeks, pray about the kind of Christmas you want this year and start a conversation with your loved ones about what they really want out of Christmas.



## ***The Christmas Pledge***

Believing in the true spirit of Christmas, I commit myself to:

*Remember those people  
who truly need my gifts*

*Express my love in more  
direct ways than gifts*

*Examine my holiday  
activities in the light of my  
deepest values*

*Be a peacemaker within  
my circle of family and  
friends*

*Rededicate myself to my  
spiritual growth*

