

The West Wagga Wag

Issue 178

December 2017

Coming Events

**Adoration of the Blessed
Sacrament, Holy Trinity**

- 6 to 7am daily;

- overnight from 9pm Friday
through to 7am Saturdays

First Sunday of Advent Sun 3

Saint Nicholas Wed 6

Saint Ambrose Thu 7

Immaculate Conception Fri 8

Saint Juan Diego Sat 9

Second Sunday of Advent Sun 10

Our Lady of Guadalupe Tue 12

Saint Lucy Wed 13

Saint John of the Cross Thu 14

Third Sunday of Advent Sun 17

Saint Peter Canisius Thu 21

Fourth Sunday of Advent Sun 24

Christmas! Mon 25

Saint Stephen Tue 26

Saint John Wed 27

The Holy Innocents Thu 28

Feast of the Holy Family Sun 31

Mary the Mother of God! Mon 1

**Monthly Cuppa, after 9am Mass
on last Sunday of the month.**

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The date for submissions for the next
Wag is: Wednesday Jan 3rd.

New Parishioners Profess their Faith

The solemnity of Christ the King had an added joy this year for the parish as we welcomed two new parishioners.

Mrs Georgia Farrell and her daughter Mrs Pennie Norville professed their faith in Jesus Christ and in his one, holy, Catholic and apostolic Church.

Having already received the Sacrament of Penance, they received the Sacrament of Confirmation and made their first Holy Communion.

More on page 6.



Pennie Norville is supported and sponsored by Robert Zaragoza and Georgia Farrell is sponsored by Rose Zaragoza as the preliminary prayers for the Sacrament of Confirmation are read. Thomas Stephens serves Fr Gerard and is also assisted by Bede Funnell.

You are invited to celebrate!

The West Wagga Catholic Parish is turning 50!

You are invited to Mass at 6pm and dinner afterwards, on December 16th at Holy Trinity, Ashmont.

Like to bring a plate of food to share? Suitable items would be finger foods, sandwiches, cold meats and cakes.

WANTED - historic photographs of the life and times of the parish and parishioners for the Jubilee anniversary book, please contact Father Gerard 6931 3601.



pastor's page - Advent!



We are in the holy season of Advent!

This is a reminder to us that we, like the people of the Old Testament, are people looking forward; they were looking forward to the First Coming of Christ and we are looking forward to the Second Coming. We know that this world will not last forever, both in the sense that we will die and also that this world will pass away. We live in this world as pilgrims, but imagine pilgrims walking towards the east, as the light of dawn already begins to colour the world and makes their hearts beat with excitement and longing for the full light of day.

A good way to prepare for Christmas and for the Second Coming is to fill the empty moments of each day, when our minds are usually in neutral, with "Aspirations".

An aspiration is a short prayer meant to be memorized and repeated throughout the day. These simple prayers help us continually turn our thoughts toward God.

We can use these prayers while waiting - for the kettle to boil, or the computer to get going, when stuck at a traffic light, queuing up at the shops, in a boring meeting or whatever. We can call to mind the sacred whilst in the midst of the workday or whatever, turning blank time into something of eternal value. But don't do it during a conversation!

Aspiration is a late Middle English word, which comes from the Latin

aspiratio, from the Latin verb aspirare, "to breath upon."

Today, we think of aspirations as hopes or ambitions, or the things toward which our hopes or ambitions are aimed. But that meaning of the word is actually later, and based on the earlier, more literal one—our aspirations or prayers rise up to the heights, where God hears them and draws us to Him.

PRAY WITHOUT CEASING

In the hustle and bustle of modern life, we may be inclined to think that the Christians of centuries past had more time to pray and to focus their lives upon Christ. But the reality is that the work and stress of everyday life has always made it hard for us to turn our thoughts toward God and the world to come. Christian worship, such as the Mass and the Liturgy of the Hours (the official daily prayer of the Church), reminds us of our duty to God, and His love for us.

But in between these official and communal periods of prayer, we need to keep our "eyes on the prize." Indeed, Saint Paul, after telling us to "Rejoice always," goes on to urge us to "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thessalonians 5:16-17). This is how we can "In all circumstances give thanks, for this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus" (1 Thessalonians 5:18).

The Church, both East and West, long ago took Saint Paul's words to heart, and created hundreds of short aspirations that Christians can learn by heart. Ideally, such prayers should become second nature, as much a part of our daily lives as breathing—and now you see how the word came to be applied to this type of prayer!

In the Eastern Church, both Orthodox and Catholic, the most common aspiration is the Jesus Prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of

God, have mercy on me, a sinner" or even just "Jesus!" said with faith and love. In our Western part of the Catholic Church, many similar short prayers have indulgences attached to them, to encourage their frequent recitation; and while the habit of praying aspirations has declined in recent decades, younger Catholics are getting into it as once their grandparents did.

Some common aspirations include

"Come Holy Spirit, enlighten me!"

"Sacred Heart of Jesus, Thy Kingdom come!"

"Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, have mercy on us!"

"O Heart of Jesus, burning with love of me, make my heart burn with love of Thee."

"Not my will, but Thine be done."

The Glory Be...

"Jesus, Mary and Joseph I love you, save souls."

and especially for Advent,

"Come Lord Jesus! (Maranatha!)"

And some for Our Lady:

"Our Lady Help of Christians, pray for us."

"O Mary conceive without original sin, pray for us who have recourse to thee."

"Immaculate Heart of Mary, cause of our joy, pray for us."

Why not pick one to use each week of Advent?

May God enrich our Advent with His grace so that we may be enriched by our celebration of this coming Christmas.

Fr Thomas Casanova CCS

December Drill Droll



Left. Left. Left, Right, OUCH!

"Halt!" shouted our drill instructor. He had noticed that, for the umpteenth time, a recruit kept going to his right on a left command. Our instructor approached the directionally challenged Marine and stomped on his left foot.

"Now," he said, "when I say 'left,' it's the one that hurts."

Dinner is Served - Distrustful of Army chefs' culinary talents, my father quizzed the top cook at his base. How did he know when the food was ready to be served? Dad asked. "Easy," said the sergeant, glaring back.

"When it's burning, it's cooking. When it's smoking, it's done."

What's a Motto? - As a new paratrooper, I was struck by all the T-shirts on base emblazoned with the motto "Death from above!" Later I noticed a submariner with a T-shirt that declared "Death from below!"

Then, standing in line for chow one day, I was served by an Army cook. His T-shirt had a skull with a crossed fork and spoon underneath and yet another warning: "Death from within!"

Air Force Talk - Pointing to a pan of chicken wings and legs disguised in the classic mess-hall manner, a young airman asked the mess sergeant, "What's for chow?"

"Air Force chicken," replied the sergeant. "You want wings or landing gear?"

Junk Food - To mail a big package of cookies to my two Air Force sons, both of whom were serving in Saudi Arabia, I was required to attach a label describing the contents. I carefully marked the box "Cookies" and sent it off, but after a month my sons said they had yet to receive my package.

Suspicious, I baked another batch, only this time I labeled the contents "Health Food." Within a week my sons reported they had received the goodies.

Stick to your guns - A new soldier was on sentry duty at the main gate. His orders were clear. No car was to enter unless it had a special sticker on the windshield. A big Army car came up with a general seated in the back. The sentry said, "Halt, who goes there?"

The chauffeur, a corporal, says, "General Wheeler."

"I'm sorry, I can't let you through. You've got to have a sticker on the windshield."

The general said, "Drive on!"

The sentry said, "Hold it! You really can't come through. I have orders to shoot if you try driving in without a sticker."

The general repeated, "I'm telling you, son, drive on!"

The sentry walked up to the rear window and said, "General, I'm new at this. Do I shoot you or the driver?"

Old army days joke - Two men were boasting to each other about their old army days.

"Why, my outfit was so well drilled," declared one, "that when they presented arms all you could hear was slap, slap, click."

"Very good," conceded the other, "but when my company presented arms you'd just hear slap, slap, jingle."

"What was the jingle?" asked the first. "Oh," replied the other offhand, "just our medals."

First Draft - I didn't enlist in the Army — I was drafted. So I wasn't going to make life easy for anyone. During my physical, the doctor asked softly, "Can you read the letters on the wall?"

"What letters?" I answered slyly.

"Good," said the doctor. "You passed the hearing test."

Vision Issues - During World War II, selective service wasn't always so selective. My nearsighted friend

went before the draft board to explain just how poor his vision was. "If I lose my glasses, I won't be able to see at all," he told them.

"Don't you worry," replied the sergeant in charge. "When we attack, we'll stick you in front of the battalion. You won't miss a thing."

Giving Up - After joining the Navy, my husband underwent a physical. During the exam, it was discovered that, due to an abnormality, he couldn't fully extend his arms above his head. Perplexed, the doctor conferred with another doctor.

"Let him pass," suggested the second doctor. "I don't see any problems unless he has to surrender."

Fear Factor - I served in a parachute regiment. During a night-time exercise, I was seated next to a young officer. He was looking a bit pale, so I asked, "Scared, lieutenant?"

"No," he replied. "Apprehensive."

"What's the difference?"

"That means I'm scared, but with a university education."

Facelift - After my niece returned from her second tour in Iraq, I remarked how beautiful her complexion looked. "What do you use on your face to keep it so smooth?" I asked.

"Nothing," she said. "I've been sandblasted."

Why did the chef have to stop cooking? He ran out of Thyme.

Why did the chef quit? They cut his celery.



MEDIA RELEASE: RESPONSE TO SAME-SEX MARRIAGE SURVEY RESULT



Catholic Communications, Sydney Archdiocese,

15 Nov 2017

The Catholic Archbishop of Sydney, Most Rev. Anthony Fisher OP, says he is both disappointed and heartened by the result of the National Marriage Postal Survey on changing the legal definition of marriage in Australia.

"While I do not deny the good will of many who voted Yes, I am deeply disappointed that the likely result will be legislation to further deconstruct marriage and family in Australia," Archbishop Fisher said.

"But I am heartened that millions of Australians still stand by the conviction that marriage is a unique relationship between a man and woman. In fact, only 48% of eligible voters voted Yes to redefining marriage in law."

"To the many already-married couples and those contemplating it I say: don't let this decision dishearten you or undermine your

appreciation of the sanctity of real marriage."

Archbishop Fisher said he wished to acknowledge all those who had courageously spoken up for traditional marriage in very difficult circumstances.

"From the outset it has often seemed a David and Goliath struggle with politicians, corporates, celebrities, journalists, professional and sporting organisations drowning out the voices of ordinary Australians and pressuring everyone to vote Yes," the Archbishop said. "What's remarkable is how many stuck to their guns and voted No or abstained."

"I recognise that for some people this debate has been a cause of distress. It is time now to come together as a nation, renew our friendships with those who think differently to us, and ensure that respect for different beliefs is clearly enshrined in our laws and customs."

Archbishop Fisher said it was vital that new marriage legislation protects rights to religious belief and expression, free speech and association, in education and parenting. "Polling data shows both yes and no voters support robust religious liberty protections."

Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull has previously said he believes in

religious freedom "even more strongly" than in same-sex marriage and Opposition Leader Bill Shorten has promised to ensure that any marriage redefinition also respects freedom of religion.

"Lame proposals to protect ministers of religion and places of worship offer no protection to the 99.9% of religious believers who are not clergy," the Archbishop said. "It is imperative that our political leaders enact laws that protect the rights of all, religious believers included."

"Many of those who voted Yes and celebrate today's 'victory' no doubt do so out of love and respect for same-sex attracted people. Many of us No voters likewise count same-sex attracted people among family, friends, colleagues and neighbours and we abhor bigotry, vilification or discrimination against them. We trust that our community can show a similar generosity of spirit towards those with religious faith."

"As we create a legal 'right' to marry a person of the same sex, we must not trade off existing rights to religious belief and expression, and other freedoms. There is room in the Australian public square for both. Surely it is not beyond the wit and good will of our political leaders to progress both concerns."

Most Rev Anthony Fisher OP

Catholic Archbishop of Sydney

What is 'marriage'? What will it be?

M Casanova

A rose by any other name would smell as sweet. Yes, but if a nonsense 'law' calls cauliflower 'rose', will it smell like a rose? Shopping for 'roses' could get quite confusing!

If a 'law' told us to agree, in our hearts, that $2 + 2 = 5$, then our duty, not just as Catholics but as rational and free Australians, would be to refuse, to pray and to work to free our families and our whole country.

A 'law' that calls same-sex unions 'marriage' does not change same-sex unions from physiologically-destructive to natural. We are right to resist. We're not alone, there are almost 5 million, plus our children!



New Parishioners Profess their Faith continued

Pennie also had the joy of seeing her own children, Annalyse and Bucky make their first Holy Communion on this great solemnity of Jesus, King of kings and Lord of lords.

As a family, Mrs Farrell, her daughter Pennie and her grandchildren Annalyse and Bucky have been preparing for their reception into the Catholic Church since early this year. Given that the great feast of Christ the King is celebrated annually, they will be able to recall and rejoice in their expressed love of Jesus Christ each year.

As a parish community, we welcomed them to the 9 AM Mass which they regularly attend when not worshipping in the church of Our Lady of the Blessed Eucharist, San Isidore where Annalyse and Bucky were baptised on July 1st.

We wish them all well for the future and pray that they receive every grace and blessing from Almighty God.



Annalyse Norville and her brother Bucky receive certificates from Fr Gerard after Mass, with Georgia their grandmother in the background.

CHRISTMAS TIMETABLE MASS AND CONFESSIONS FOR THE WEST WAGGA PARISH

Confessions: 21 Dec Thur 7.30pm
22 Dec Fri 11am - 12 noon

Holy Trinity Christmas Vigil 6.45pm
Holy Trinity Midnight Mass 12am

San Isidore Church Christmas Day : 8am
Holy Trinity Church : 9
Collingullie Church : 9.30
Home of Compassion : 10.30
Holy Trinity Church : 5.30pm

COME TO BETHLEHEM

Volunteers Wanted:

Bethlehem set up, Tuesday, December 19 and Wednesday 20th.

Info at 6931 3601

Bethlehem nightly scenes 22nd, 23rd, 24th costumes available.

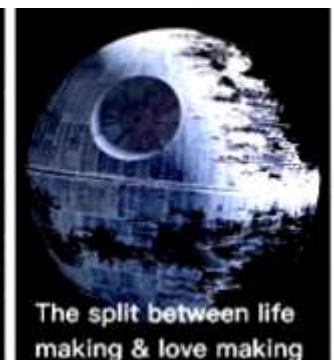
Please contact Sabina on 0419 414 273.

2018 - anniversary of two hugely prophetic and powerful Church documents!

Humanae Vitae, 50, Bl Pope Paul VI

Veritatis Splendor, 25, St John Paul II

The threat to humanity



The prophetic response



Reasons I used to hate Advent and why I don't now

Ruth Baker - Growing up Catholic, Advent was always strictly observed in our home. We never skipped over it to start Christmas early. Though I had a good idea of the purpose of Advent, I made my way though it grimly.

I looked towards it with a sense of dread. Very simplistically, it felt to me as a child that to get a good Christmas, you first had to pay for it by getting through Advent! I hated Advent and I couldn't understand it or the point of it.

Thankfully, bit by bit, my thoughts and attitude towards Advent began to change and I was able to see it differently. I began to honour the time of Advent and see it in all its fullness. So, why did I hate it and how did these thoughts change?!

1. The Mass Readings

Look at any of the Advent Gospel passages or daily readings and you will notice a common theme: staying awake because you do not know when the Lord is coming, repentance, and other slightly 'end of the world' apocalyptic phrases.

They're the kind of verses I preferred to ignore and brush over- and certainly as a child I found them rather scary.

But I learned as an adult that even if I didn't like them, they were still God's word and more than deserved my consideration.

What was God trying to say to me through them? Interestingly, with regards to these very readings, the Church writes that "Advent is a period for devout and expectant delight."

Delight?! I had clearly missed something! Facing these readings forced me to face my own fears about my mortality, the world's mortality and what kind of Christ I imaged coming at the end of time.

Without watering down the meaning of these readings I began to see the paradox of a Christ who is King, capable of both justice and mercy, gentleness and power.

If I professed to love Christ with all my heart and to see Him as my sovereign and my best friend in this life, what did I have to fear at the end of time or the end of my days?

2. The Silence

We're always being told to 'find the time for more silence' - and never more so than during Advent.

I knew I had the time for silence, but I hated silence, and I didn't like being told to spend more time in something that I hated!

No one had told me what to do with the silence. It wasn't until I attended a talk from a Carmelite friar on the subject that I began to understand. He told us: "If you can't bear to sit in silence then you first have to deal with the things that come up in that silence".

This wasn't an excuse to delay discovering silence, but it was a recognition that it's in silence that our deepest fears, hurts and pain clamour to make themselves heard above our normal distractions.

Slowly, I began to discover a silence with God that was not frightening or stern, but gentle, instructive, insightful- and peaceful.

And I found that God is longing to speak to us, and maybe He had been waiting years to say what He wanted to me. But I just hadn't given Him the chance to be heard.

3. The Waiting Game

Because I wasn't really engaging in Advent, it was just one long counting down until Christmas, when the real festivities could start.

Watching a powerful 'Advent in 2 Minutes' video really helped to change how I perceived Advent. It reminds us that "there is joy in waiting" and that Advent is about "expecting, waiting, hoping and praying"- and adds that if "you're sick of Christmas by the 25th you haven't done Advent properly!". Engaging in Advent is like choosing

to take the scenic route and enjoying the journey, rather than trying to fast-track it on the freeway and getting stuck in a traffic jam.

4. Misunderstanding Christmas

As a kid, Christmas was wonderful, exciting and I knew it to be special and holy, but I assumed that Christmas was only relevant if it was enjoyable and if you were lucky enough to be in a good place in your life at that moment. If you weren't, then that was very sad and Christmas could make no difference to your life. So Advent was also just a hoping game that Christmas would turn out to be as good as I hoped it would be and that I would get all the enjoyment I wanted out of it.

My understanding grew that Christmas was utterly relevant for our lives right now, and in Christ's first coming we were celebrating the complete reality of His entrance into our lives. We can so often sanitize the stable and forget what scandal, filth, and fear the world He was born into was. We forget that Love was amongst the mess of that first Christmas- and that Christ- not defined by time, re-enters the mess and love of our hearts again and again each year. Christmas became less about the luck of whether I'd have a good time and far more about the solemnity and joy of celebrating the reality of a God-made-man. Advent therefore became not a waiting game, but an awe-inspiring time preparing to meet a God who loves us so much that He fashioned a remedy to our brokenness in the form of His own son.

Whatever your perception of Advent, we hope that you have a blessed and fruitful season.



Archbishop Chaput Proposes ‘Revolution of Joy’



Michelle Bauman La Rosa/CNA/
EWTN News

In a world that can sometimes seem disheartening, Christians have a path to the future in lives of joy and love, Archbishop Charles Chaput told those gathered Thursday at the annual Napa Institute conference.

While Christians need to see the world’s problems as they are, “we can’t let the weight of the world crush the joy that’s our birthright by our rebirth in Jesus Christ through baptism,” he said.

“If we cling to that joy, if we cling to God, then all things are possible,” he added. “The only way to create new life in a culture is to live our lives joyfully and fruitfully, as individuals ruled by convictions greater than ourselves and shared with people we know and love. It’s a path that’s very simple and very hard at the same time. But it’s the only way to make a revolution that matters.”

“When young people ask me how to change the world,” Archbishop Chaput said, “I tell them to love each other, get married, stay faithful to one another, have lots of children, and raise those children to be men and women of Christian character. Faith is a seed. It doesn’t flower overnight. It takes time and love and effort.”

“The future belongs to people with children, not with things. Things rust and break,” the archbishop continued. “But every child is a universe of possibility that reaches into eternity ... The soul of a child is forever.”

In the face of the many challenges of today, he pointed to an idea from St. Augustine: “It’s no use whining about the times because we are the times.”

“It’s through us that God acts in society and the Gospel of Jesus Christ is carried forward. So we need to own that mission. And only when we do will anything change for the better,” the archbishop said.

“This isn’t a time to retreat from the world. We need to engage the world and convert it,” he added, saying that “we have every reason to trust in God and find in him our hope.”

Reflecting on the temptation to give up, Archbishop Chaput — whose most recent book *Strangers in a Strange Land* (Henry Holt) came out in February — said this is “always easier than fighting for what we believe and living what we know to be true.”

“Cowardice solves the problem of conflict — at least in the short run. But it abandons the many thousands of great young Catholic lay and clergy leaders who are already part of our landscape,” he said. “I know many of them. And they look to us for example and support.”

While Catholics could react to this situation with “a well-crafted strategic plan,” the archbishop said there is no “quick fix” for cultures, which are more like living organisms than corporations or math problems.

Prayer was also a focus of his remarks. Reflecting on the “hellish” aspect to modern life that people fill with “discord, confusion and noise,” he recommended Cardinal Robert Sarah’s book *The Power of Silence* (Ignatius). He encouraged his audience to “turn off the noise that cocoons us in consumer anxieties and appetites.”

“If we don’t pray, we can’t know and love God,” Archbishop Chaput said.

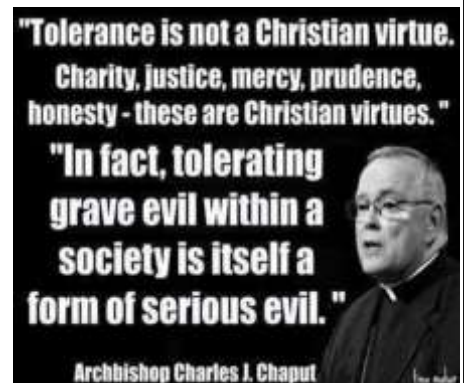
He endorsed reading the Bible as an antidote to the noise of life. Reading the Bible, as well as histories, biographies and great novels are antidotes to “chronic stupidity and a conditioning by mass media that have no sympathy for the things we believe.”

Archbishop Chaput suggested that the modern world is not much different from the Athens that St. Paul visited. The city was “full of idols...”

The Acts of the Apostles are “a portrait of courage as St. Paul, Christianity’s greatest missionary, preaches the Gospel in the sophisticated heart of Athens,” he continued. Despite mockery and condemnation, St. Paul persists and “understands that his audience has a fundamental hunger for the Godly that hasn’t been fed, and he refuses to be quiet or afraid.”

The archbishop cited Jesus’ words from the Gospel of John: “When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth ...”

“The words of the Gospel remind us that the future is God’s, and we should trust in the Holy Spirit, who leads us in a spirit of truth. We don’t need to fear the future. We don’t need to know it before its time. What we do need is to have confidence in the Lord and to give our hearts to the Father who loves us. The future is in his hands.”



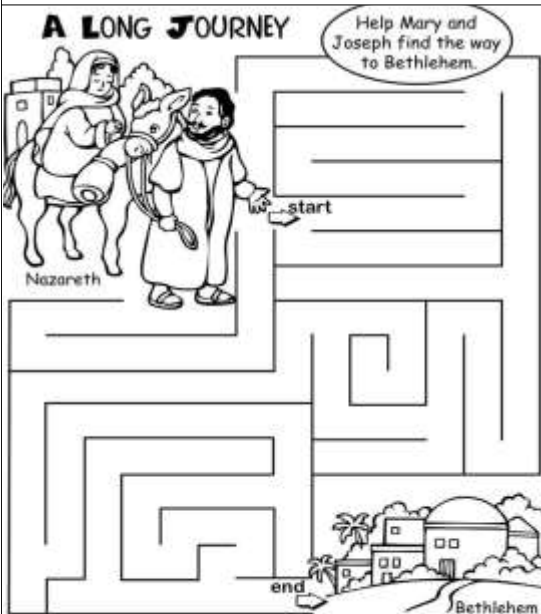
The West Wagga Wag

West Wagga Parish



Serving: Ashmont,
Collingullie,
Glenfield, Lloyd,
and San Isidore

ADVENT!



Color the picture, then each day color one star beginning with number one.

Find the words below hidden in the 225 letters to the right.

- | | |
|----------|-------|
| MIDNIGHT | OWNER |
| SERVANTS | CROWS |
| SLEEPING | HOUSE |
| ROOSTER | ALERT |
| EVENING | KNOW |
| CHARGE | DAWN |
| ANGELS | HOUR |
| HEAVEN | COME |
| GUARD | TIME |
| WATCH | DAY |

V B H D H P R E G W S W H O L
 F O W O W E M F C H A R G E U
 N L F O T I H X W M I X M I S
 N H N S T O N O Z I A C O M E
 R K O Q A V M W J D N H W J C
 T O M U H L Y N J N G E A K T
 R D G Y R O I E J I E A T L R
 S W A G G N U R R G L V C R G
 B C Q W U X M S J H S E H N X
 U D R A N A K X E T P N I F D
 B G A O F M R Z Y F S P C J V
 F P A Y W N K D E V E N I N G
 P T O X K S O S C E H T W T I
 A L E R T E F X L M Y J G C C
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