

DROP THE BLANKET!

I **LOVE** (in all capital bolded letters on purpose) the Charlie Brown Christmas special.

In its simplicity and honesty, it drives home the true meaning of Christmas. When the first piano notes are hit at the beginning, you know it's not going to be your typical Christmas special. In less than one hour the special has a very communicative dog, Beethoven music, a counselling session, imitation trees long before there were imitation trees, and a Christmas pageant we never get to see!

After all the commentary on Christmas being too commercial is finished and Charlie Brown is exhausted by the pressures of Christmas, he yells out, "Isn't there anyone who knows what Christmas is all about?" Linus immediately jumps in and says, "Sure, Charlie Brown, I can tell you what Christmas is all about!" He then moves to the centre of the stage and ask for "Lights Please!" He then recites the passage from the Gospel of Luke, and halfway through something happens that a lot of people miss!



"And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night, and lo, the Angel of the Lord came upon them and the glory of the Lord shone 'round about them and they were so afraid, and the Angels said unto them, 'Fear not!'" And then it happens!!!! **Linus drops his blanket.** NEVER before and NEVER again will we see in print or in motion cartoon form, Linus let go of his trusty blanket...his security blanket. The exact moment after he lets go of his blanket, he was then able to throw his hands in the air! To me that speaks louder than any other sentiment in this classic cartoon. My name isn't

Linus and I don't carry a blanket, but I am certainly insecure about things and I am guessing there are a lot of people just like me. I know some of us hang onto things we should 'let go and let God'. We can carry the loss of friends and family members to sickness and death. Some of us have mourned the distance between ourselves and our friends and or family members. Some of us have carried on relationships long past their expiry date! I can assure you that my pride and my foolishness have made me think I can control everything in my life. My name isn't Linus but I guess I do carry a secret blanket people cannot see...maybe you do too.

By throwing his hands up heavenward and thus totally believing the "FEAR NOT", Linus teaches all of us to just trust in a plan bigger than what we think we know! In essence, this is the journey and challenge of Advent. We are called to not only prepare our hearts, but to perhaps give our hearts to the Lord. Once and only once we have given our total selves to God will we suddenly live a worry-free and anxious-free life.

So this Advent, as the candles are lit, as the darkness comes earlier and earlier, as the malls fill up and our wallets get thinner, we are called to not buy into all the materialism of Christmas. We are called to DROP THE BLANKET, our blanket, and to "FEAR NOT, for behold I bring you tidings of great joy that belong to all people!"

May all of you have a blessed and a merry Christmas. May the birth of the Christ Child bring you and your families and friends nothing but joy and hope.

By Wayne Lachapelle School Chaplaincy Leader, Notre Dame CSS

