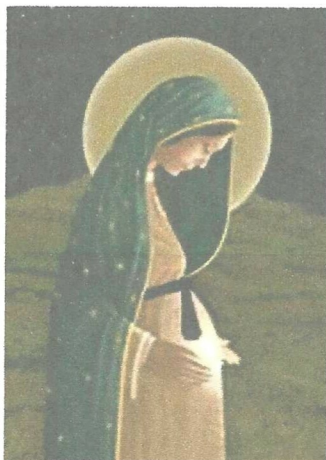


## Advent – Make Ready the Way of the Lord

“Again, Jesus spoke to them saying “I am the Light of the world. He who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.” John 8:12



Mother of Life, Nellie Edwards

### Opening Prayer – Hail, Holy Queen

Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. To thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us. And after this our exile, show unto us the blessed Fruit of thy womb, Jesus. O clement O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary. Pray for us, o Holy Mother of God, that we may be made worth of the promises of Christ. Amen.

### Play “Oh come Oh come Emmanuel”, Read the Advent Gospel Reflections Introduction.

*Reflection:* Reminds us of the “Hail Holy Queen” prayer and how Jesus conquered death in the silent darkness of Holy Saturday.

### Present Advent Videos

[What Is Advent? - YouTube](#) – Advent is a time of **Waiting, Hope, Anticipation** for God’s promises/prophecies to be fulfilled. Wake up, be ready, know and look for God’s signs.

[Understanding the True Meaning of Advent - YouTube](#) – emptying ourselves, let the spirit control the flesh, sacrifice for God (Time, Treasure, Talent), Prepares for the Joy of Christmas and receiving the Lord into our hearts). Repent (confession), Be watchful, Mediate/Pray, Be Vigilant.

### What is Advent?

*Advent* – Latin *Adventus* for “to come to” and in Greek *Parousia*. *Korban* is sacrifice in Hebrew, which means “to draw close to”. The mass is a Thanksgiving sacrifice to draw us close to God.

It is the first of the 6 seasons of the Church’s liturgical year (Mystery of Christ unfolded through the cycle of year) that begins a new Church Year. These liturgical seasons call us to live Christ’s mystery in our own lives. Liturgy means the action of the work of the people.

*Reflection: Advent takes place in the Winter season. We are in the desert in darkness. We are in exile. We are the Church Militant in battle. We are bearing our crosses with Christ to win souls. In a way, we are always in this season while on Earth, because we are always preparing for the Lord to be a part of our heart and mind every day. We are the Pilgrim Church on Earth. We are part of a parish, which in Greek is paroikin, which means traveler or wanderer or pilgrim.*

It is a time of the Church waiting with expectation, a time of hope and anticipation. Israel waited for centuries for the fulfillment of countless Old Testament prophecies. We also wait for our savior to come again at the End Times and in the Eucharist daily.

In Advent we fast and make sacrifices for God like giving of our Time, Talent, and Treasure. We spend more time in prayer. It is penitential time to pursue deeper conversion by receiving God's Mercy in the sacrament of confession. The penance of Advent prepares us for the joy of Christmas.

We are to prepare a Way a Highway for the Lord in our lives, so he can come directly into our hearts without any obstacles. God says before his coming that he will level the mountains (Our egos/Pride/Sin) and lift up the Lowly (Poor and Poor in Spirit/Humble), so our path is smooth and straight.

We are to empty ourselves like the jars of Cana, so we can be filled with the wine of the Holy Spirit. Originated as a 40 day fast in preparation of Christmas. It is a way for the Spirit to control the flesh not the other way around.

*Reflection: Advent should remind us of our quiet reflection on our ride to Mass and as we enter Church and the Penitential Act as part of the Introductory Rite prior to the liturgy of the word. We do this to prepare ourselves for the sacred mysteries. We begin preparing for mass before we get to church. First, we are called to mass and then we respond. Also, Advent should remind us of the time of silence and prayer before Faith and Love is born in the heart of a disciple.*

## **When is Advent in 2023?**

Advent begins with Sunday of the feast of Saint Andrew, which is December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023 and it ends before the evening Mass for the Vigil of Christmas December 24<sup>th</sup>. It is celebrated across 4 Sundays (12/3, 12/10, 12/17, 12/24).

- 12/6 - Saint Nicholas
- 12/8 Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception (Patron Saint of the United States) of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Holy Day of obligation)
- Our Lady of Guadalupe on 12/12

## **What is the Advent Liturgical Colors?**

- Bluish Purple. It symbolizes Humility, Penance, Royalty, Sacrifice, sorrow for our sins.
- Rose - on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday for Joy/Rejoicing on Gaudete Sunday, imminent birth of Jesus.

## **How do we get ready, prepare, how and wait without giving up hope and without being distracted?**

- How did Israel prepare for the Messiah?

*There were many people in the Old Testament that were not ready for Jesus (Inn keepers who denied a place for Mary and Joseph), Herod, The scholars of the law (Pharisees and Sadducees). Some were ready for example (Mary and Joseph, the Magi, the Shepherds).*

- How do we prepare to receive the Jesus in the Eucharist today?
- How do we stay vigilant for the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming at our Death and Judgement, so we are ready to join Christ in His heavenly Kingdom?

**Confession** – “Repent/Change the kingdom of God is at hand,” It is time to pursue deeper conversion by receiving God’s Mercy in the sacrament of reconciliation. Going to Confession is strongly recommended during advent. Jesus tells us to stay awake, remain vigilant, and to not fall asleep spiritually and to not be caught off guard.

**Holy Mass/Eucharistic Adoration/Prayer** – Ideal time to attend Mass and Eucharistic Adoration more frequently. Attend our first Rorate Caeli Mass on Friday 12/15 at 7 p.m. in the Shrine

**Reflect on the Joyful mysteries of the rosary to increase the following fruits of the Spirit:**

- The Annunciation - Humility
- The Visitation – Charity towards Neighbor
- The Nativity - Poverty of Spirit and Detachment from Material Things
- Presentation of Jesus in the Temple - Obedience
- Finding the Child Jesus in the Temple – Joy in Finding Jesus

**Simplify your life, slow down your pace, remove obstacles in your life that cause Sin and Temptation**

**Contemplate/Reflect on the Word of God and Quiet your Soul, Listen for God’s voice in the Silence. Use Advent Journals on Gospel Reflection. Practice Lectio Divina** – Means Divine Reading, a Latin Monastic practice for scripture reading and prayer. Lection (read), Mediatio (Reflect/Meditate), Oratio (Pray/Respond), Contemplatio (Contemplate/Rest).

## **Spiritual and Corporate works of Mercy**

### **Church Advent Traditions -What traditions do your family participate in?**

- **Lighting an Advent Wreath (Church Tradition adopted in the Middle Ages)**
  - It is normally in the shape of a circle to symbolize that God is eternal with no beginning nor end.
  - Decorated with holly leaves which symbolize the crown of thorns.
  - Decorated with Evergreen which always stays green, symbolizing the unchanging, faithful nature of God and eternal life,
  - It is lit with candles symbolizing Jesus as the light of the world. The unlit candle represents the dark ages before Christ coming and the 4 weeks of Advent and 4,000 years from Adam and Eve until Jesus. Each week as more candles is lit, the light shines brighter as it gets closer to Jesus’s arrival.

*"I am the light of the world, whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12)*

**4 Virtues are celebrated and a new candle is lit along with a prayer is completed each Saturday or Sunday evening with the family and they are lit every evening of the week after that.**

**Week 1 (Purple Candle)- Hope/Prophecy Candle in remembrance of the Prophets who foretold the birth of Christ. "Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel." Isaiah 7:14**

**Week 2 (Purple Candle) – Faith/Bethlehem Candle as we remember Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem. " This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger"**

**Week 3 (Rose Candle) – Joy (Gaudete Sunday (Latin for Joy) 1 week prior to Christmas)/Shepherds Candle to remind us of the joy that the world experienced at the birth of Jesus. "And there were shepherds living out in the field nearby keeping watch over their flocks at night. An Angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them." Luke 2:8-14)**

**Week 4 (Purple Candle) – Peace/Angel's Candle reminding us of the message of the Angels.**

**"Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on Earth peace to those on whom his favor rests." Luke 2:13-24**

**Christmas Day/Christ Candle White –lit on Christmas and placed in the center of the wreath. White symbolizes the purity of Christ, sinless, spotless pure Savior. Those who receive Christ as Savior are washed of their sins and made whiter than snow.**

**"Come now, let us settle the matter," says the Lord. "Though your sins are like scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they are red as crimson, they shall be like wool (Isaiah 1:18)**

- **Make a Jesse Tree –Received its name because the prophet Isaiah said 11:1 "But a shoot shall sprout from the stump of Jesse, and from its roots a bud shall blossom." Jesse was the Father of King David, and Jesus is called the Son of David in the New Testament. One ornament is added each day that symbolize the ancestors of Jesus, events and prophecies that tell the story of God through the Old Testament and using scripture verses that go along with each ornament.**
- **Straw in the Manger – Put a straw in the manger every time a someone does a good deed to create an atmosphere of thoughtfulness, kindness. (Jesus told Saint Faustina, "I am giving you 3 ways of exercising Mercy toward your neighbor, by Deed, Word, and Prayer" Diary entry 742)**
- **Advent music**

[Songs of Advent | 8 Christian & Catholic Advent Hymns & Songs | Choir w/ Lyrics | Sunday 7pm Choir - YouTube](#)

[Advent Prose - Drop Down, Ye Heavens, From Above - Rorate Caeli - words - Daniel Roberts | Organist - YouTube](#)

- **Advent Calendars – Used to count down the days until Christmas**
- **Nativity Scene – don't add baby Jesus until Christmas Day**

## **Ending Prayer by Matthew Kelly**

"God of hope, I look to you with an open heart and yearning spirit. During this Advent Season, I will keep alert and awake, listening for your word and keeping to your precepts. My hope is in you" Amen.

### **Scriptures for Advent Reflection**

#### **Psalm 130, 5-8**

"I wait for the Lord; my soul waits and I hope for his word. My soul looks for the Lord more than sentinels for daybreak. More than sentinel for daybreak let Israel hope in the Lord. For with the Lord is mercy, with him is plenteous redemption, and he will redeem Israel from all its sins."

Psalm 23 - "Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff comfort me. You set a table before me in front of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows. "

Wisdom 3: 1-9 - "God has tested them and found them worthy of himself. As gold in the furnace, he proved them, and as sacrificial offerings he took them to himself."

#### **Mark 13:32-37**

"But of that day or hour no one knows neither the angels in heaven nor the son, but only the Father be watchful be alert you do not know when the time will come. It is like a man traveling abroad he leaves home and places his servant in charge each with his work and orders the gate keeper to be on the watch. Watch therefor you do not know when the Lord of the house is coming whether in evening or at midnight or at cock crow or in the morning. May he not come suddenly and find you sleeping. What I say to you I say to all Watch."

#### **Luke 11:15 -our enemies are watching us.**

"The scribes and the pharisees watched him closely to see if he would cure on the sabbath, so that they might discover a reason to accuse him."

#### **Luke 11 37-41**

"After he had spoken, a pharisee invited him to dine at his home. He entered and reclined at table to eat. The pharisee was amazed to see that he didn't observe the prescribed washing before the meal. The Lord said to him oh you Pharisees, although you cleanse the outside of the cup and the dish, inside you are filled with plunder and evil. You fools did not the maker of the outside also make the inside? But as to what is within give alms and behold everything will be clean for you."

#### **Luke 11:53-54 – They are prowling like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour**

"When he left the scribes and pharisees began to act with hostility toward him and to interrogate him about many things for they were plotting to catch him at something he might say."

John 6:37-40 - "Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and I will not reject anyone who comes to me. And this is the will of the one who sent me, that I should not lose anything of what he gave me, but that I should raise it on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in him may have eternal life, and I shall raise him on the last day."

#### **Mark 14 32-42 -Agony in the Garden, Matthew 24 – The Parousia 2<sup>nd</sup> coming, Psalm 91**