

December 3, 2023

The Month of December is dedicated to the Divine Infancy.

First Sunday of Advent

1st Reading: IS 63:16B-17, 19B; 64:2-7
Responsorial Psalm: Ps 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19
Second Reading: 1 COR 1:3-9
Gospel: MK 13:33-37

Building Faith@HOME



This week we begin a new liturgical year, Year B. Through most of the year, we will be hearing from Mark. (Last year we listened to Matthew). We begin the liturgical year with a passage where Jesus instructs his disciples to be vigilant and alert, using the parable of a man who leaves his house and puts his servants in charge, each with their assigned task. He commands the gatekeeper to watch for his return. The emphasis is on the unpredictability of the time of the master's return. Jesus urges his followers to stay awake and be ready, as they do not know when the master of the house will come back - whether in the evening, at midnight, when the rooster crows, or at dawn. The message is a call to constant vigilance and preparedness for Jesus' return, as the specific time is unknown. Advent should be a time of watchfulness for us. We must never be asleep to the daily challenge of Jesus in our lives.

Becoming Missionary Disciples: During Advent, we not only prepare ourselves to celebrate the birth of Jesus, we also check to see if we are doing all the things that will keep us ready to receive Jesus when he comes again. Talk about how your family can recommit to daily prayer, reading Scripture, and staying faithful to God's commandments. Pray together that through this Advent season your family will be more prepared to receive Jesus when he comes again. (LoyolaPress.com)



The Giving Manger helps families shift the focus of Christmas back to giving. A piece of straw is placed in the manger for each kind deed or act of service performed. On Christmas Day, the Baby is placed in the manger filled with service and love. As your family works together to give gifts of service you will find your hearts and home filled with more joy during the holiday season than ever before.

Family Table Talk

Question for Children: What special things do you do to get ready for a visitor at your house? What things can you do like that to get ready for Jesus?

Question for Youth: What is one thing that you can do this week to help you remember that Jesus is coming?

Question for Adults: When you're getting ready to receive a guest, what are some things you do? How do you apply this to receiving Christ?



Family Time Outdoors This Advent...
Here is an interesting Advent Calendar with 29 outdoor things to do during Advent! Make some family memories this Advent and enjoy God's creation!
<https://www.1000hoursoutside.com/blog/free-outdoor-advent-calendar>



Candle Name: the Prophecy Candle
The First Week of Advent Represents: Hope
Candle Color: Purple
Purple is the primary color associated with Advent. Within the Catholic Church it symbolizes penance, preparation, and sacrifice. During the first week of Advent we remember the Old Testament prophets who foretold of Jesus' coming with hope and anticipation.

Links for More Ideas, Activities & Resources FYI

- LoyolaPress.com - Children's Advent Calendar (Children faith builder) download a printable Advent Calendar
- Media.ascensionpress.com - 10 Family Advent Traditions to Try This Year (Family Faith Builders)
- Loyolapress.com - How to Bless your Advent Wreath (Family Faith Builder)
- Ncregister.com - 8 Things You Need to Know About the Immaculate Conception (Adult Faith Builder)
- ACatholicMom.com - 7 Easy St. Nicholas Feast Day (Dec. 6th) Tradition Ideas (Family Faith Builder)





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Prayer Time This Week!

Prayer@HOME

Cut & Pray!



Scripture Verse of the Week
From Sunday's Mass
December 3, 2023



Jesus said to his disciples:
"Be watchful! Be alert!
You do not know when the time
will come."
Mark 13:33

Hail Mary,
full of grace,
the Lord is with thee;
blessed art thou among
women; and blessed is the fruit
of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our
death.
Amen.

About the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception

The Immaculate Conception refers to conception of Mary who was conceived in the natural way in her mother's womb without the stain of Original Sin. The word "immaculate" means "without stain. This was an essential part of God's plan for the mother of his Son - that she be conceived free from Original Sin. In Luke 1:28 the angel Gabriel, speaking on God's behalf, addresses Mary as "full of grace" or "highly favored". In that context, this phrase means that Mary is receiving all the special divine help necessary for the task ahead. In 1854, Pope Pius IX proclaimed this dogma infallible. December 8th is the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Mary is a Holy Day of Obligation. On September 8th, nine months later, we celebrate the Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Mary is our Mother, whom we look to as a model of discipleship and as such, let us pray...

O Mary, you were conceived without sin.

Pray for me today as I seek all that is good, holy, and beautiful.

Building Prayer Time @ Home

This will be a series of family activities to try as your families start or strengthen prayer time.

Lighting the First Candle of Advent



The first candle, which is purple, symbolizes hope. It is sometimes called the "Prophecy Candle" in remembrance of the prophets, especially Isaiah, who foretold the birth of Christ. It represents the expectation felt in anticipation of the coming Messiah.

+Light the first purple candle...

+Proclaim the Scripture: "The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shined." Isaiah 9:2

+Pause for reflection.

+Advent Wreath Prayer: Dear Jesus, you are the hope in our messy world. This Advent, help us slow down, listen to your voice, and focus on what's really important. We place our hope in you as we prepare our hearts to celebrate your birth on Christmas. Amen.