



# Building Faith @ HOME

[1st Reading: IS 61:1-2A, 10-11](#)  
[Responsorial Psalm: LK 1:46-48, 49-50, 53-54](#)  
[Second Reading: 1 THES 5:16-24](#)  
[Gospel: JN 1:6-8, 19-28](#)

## The Third Sunday of Advent - Gaudete Sunday

Today we depart from the Gospel of Mark and hear from the Gospel of John. In the Gospel, John gives us testimony to the "light." He makes it clear that his is not the light, only a "voice in the desert" preparing the people for Jesus' coming so that they... or we... will recognize Him and believe. With more light shining forth from our Advent wreaths, take time to prepare your heart for Jesus. Sit quietly near the lit Advent wreath and welcome the light of God. Take notice of your breathing. With each new breath, pray, "Come, Lord Jesus." Listen to the song Maranatha, Come Lord Jesus as you sit with your Advent wreath.

[YouTube - Maranatha! Come Lord Jesus](#)

## Becoming Missionary Disciples

In family life, we learn to trust other people for protection and care. This experience of trust within the family enables children to believe us when we testify about our faith in Jesus. John the Baptist was believed by those who heard him because he helped them to recognize Jesus in their midst. In our family life, we hope and pray that we lead one another to recognize Jesus' presence in our world.

As you gather as a family, recall that during the Advent season we are invited to pay particular attention to the signs of Jesus' presence in our world. Consider some of the signs of Jesus' presence that you have experienced.

[Loyola Press](#)

## Family Table Talk

**Question for Children:** How have I spread joy this week?

**Question for Youth:** When have I received the gift of someone else's joy this week?

**Question for Adults:** The children in our lives bring joy (mostly) – share with the children in your life how you have experienced joy in their presence.

## Family Advent Activity - Bless the Tree

As you put up the family Christmas tree, give thanks to God for the gift of evergreens in the winter, the gift of lights to remind us of Jesus coming into the world, and special ornaments that remind us of family, friends and holidays past.

Reflect: What does the evergreen teach us about God's love for us? (Hint: It is everlasting!)



## Catholic Christmas Shopping Ideas

[catholic-link.org - The Best Catholic Gifts For The Women In Your Life](#)

[Catholic-link.org - Catholic Gifts For Him: Dad, Brothers, Uncles, Priests!](#)

[Catholic-link.org - The Best Catholic Gifts for Kids in 2023](#)

[Catholic-link.org - Our Favorite Catholic Gifts For Foodies](#)

[Amazon.com - Christmas Gifts for Catholics](#)

[Hallow.com - The Ultimate Catholic Gift Guide for Advent and Christmas 2023](#)

[NCRegister.com - 2023 Buy Catholic: Christmas Gift Ideas](#)



## Lighting the Third Candle



Candle Name: the Shepherd's Candle  
The Third Week of Advent Represents: Joy  
Candle Color: Pink

This third candle is pink and symbolizes rejoicing. During the third week of Advent we are filled with joy for the near arrival of Jesus on Christmas day. This Sunday is often called "Gaudete Sunday" as we reflect on the joy the shepherd's felt at the birth of Jesus.

## Links for More Ideas, Activities & Resources FYI

[Catholicicing.com](#) - O Antiphon Ideas for Catholic Families (Dec 17 - 24) (Children Faith Builder)

[CatholicCulture.org](#) - Liturgical Year Activities: O Antiphons

[Diocese of Syracuse](#) - O Antiphons poster - download and print for this week!

[Bgca.org](#) - 15 Holiday family games your kids will love (Boys & Girls Clubs of America)

Enjoy family time!



This resource is meant to be used in a digital format with hyperlinks,

Digital Format - <https://bit.ly/BuildingFaith12-17>





December 17, 2023

# Prayer@HOME

Prayer Time This Week!

Cut & Pray!



## ADVENT EMBER DAYS

### DECEMBER 20TH

PRAY a holy hour before the [Blessed Sacrament](#)  
FAST from online activity / social media

### DECEMBER 22TH

PRAY that all the faithful may believe and participate in the Eucharist  
FAST by eating only one full meal (and two smaller meals that together do not equal a full meal)

### DECEMBER 23TH

PRAY the [Litany of the Blessed Sacrament](#)  
FAST from buying something that is not needed

Did you know the word *Eucharist* means thanksgiving?



## Scripture Verse of the Week From Sunday's Mass December 17, 2023



Rejoice always.

Pray without ceasing.

In all circumstances give thanks,  
for this is the will of God for you  
in Christ Jesus.

1 Thes 5:16-18

What is your prayer of thanksgiving at  
this time?

Use this space to write your own  
prayer of thanksgiving for this week.



## ADVENT EMBER DAYS

The Ember Days are known in Latin as the *quattuor anni tempora* (the "four seasons of the year"), or formerly as the *jejunia quattuor temporum* ("fasts of the four seasons"). The four quarterly periods during which the ember days fall are called the embertides. The term Ember days refers to three days set apart for fasting, abstinence, and prayer during each of the four seasons of the year. Ember Days can be thought of as a mini-Lent with some fasting and abstinence to refocus spiritual beliefs. Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday after Gaudete Sunday (3rd Sunday of Advent) are known as "Advent Embertide." During this year of the Eucharistic Revival, we focus our prayer to renew our communion with the Eucharist,

The purpose of their introduction was

- to thank God for the gifts of nature,
- to teach men to make use of them in moderation,
- and to assist the needy or the poor.

During these "mini Lents" one is

- to pray
- to fast and
- to thank God

## Building Prayer Time @ Home

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

### Lighting the Third Candle of Advent



On this third Sunday of Advent, which the Church calls "Gaudete Sunday," meaning rejoice. The third rose colored candle is called the "Shepherd's Candle," It reminds us of the joyful anticipation of the shepherds who journeyed to see Jesus in Bethlehem.

**\*light the first and second purple candles and the pink candle**

**\*Scripture Reflection:** "And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them." Luke 2:20

**\*pause for reflection**

**\*Advent Wreath Prayer:** Dear Jesus, help us focus on you during this busy season. May we stay aware of the joy you bring into our lives. We want to find you in the everyday moments and come with hearts of gratitude to your manger on Christmas. Amen.