

Prepare a Way!

2023



A HOLY CROSS PARISH RESOURCE
FOR A SPIRITUALLY NOURISHING ADVENT SEASON

MAKING THIS ADVENT SEASON

Meaningful!



'Prepare a Way!' is an Advent resource designed to assist the reader set aside some time each day throughout the 4 weeks of Advent to reflect and allow the grace of this holy season to be ingrained into our daily lives. The resource offers daily reflections including antiphons, scripture and prayer.

The resource also makes use of the *'O Antiphons'* 7 in total, traditionally prayed in the 7 days leading to the Solemnity of Christmas. These Antiphons have been described as a "unique work of art...filled with the Spirit of the Word of God."

In addition to the readings, this year's edition includes the specific Sunday readings for this liturgical year. The traditional Sunday antiphons have also been included along with new daily prayers of reflection. Furthermore, a page of Christmas prayers have been included which you are encouraged to read with your family on Christmas Day.

Prepare a Way for the Lord in your life and home this Advent!

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR A SPIRITUALLY NOURISHING ADVENT

- * Pray the Christmas Novena (*located at back of this booklet*)
- * Attend Sunday Mass
- * Acts of Good Works (Almsgiving in support of the church and in support of those in need),
- * Fast one day each week or fast from one meal
- * Seek the Sacrament of Penance (Confession)
- * Add a Weekday Mass to your spiritual devotions
- * Attend the December First Friday of the Month Devotions (including Adoration)
- * Attend the December Mass in Latin
- * Pray the Holy Rosary in your homes as a family
- * Set up a prayer space in your home which can help to focus thoughts on Advent
- * Create or set up an Advent wreath in your home and light a candle each week of Advent
- * Pray daily for the Souls of the Faithful Departed, the Holy Souls in Purgatory and all Forgotten Souls.
- * Pray for Persecuted Christians who are forbidden from celebrating Christmas.
- * Pray the Litany of St. Joseph
- * Set up a nativity scene in your homes

Welcome!



THE HOLY SEASON OF ADVENT

In his homily of the celebration of the First Vespers of the First Sunday of Advent, at the Vatican Basilica on Saturday 2 December 2006, Pope Benedict XVI offered us the following deep reflection regarding the coming of God: At the beginning of a new yearly cycle, the liturgy invites the Church to renew her proclamation to all the peoples and sums it up in two words: 'God comes.' These words, so concise, contain an ever new evocative power.

Let us pause a moment to reflect: it is not used in the past tense—God has come, nor in the future—God will come, but in the present—'God comes.' At a closer look, this is a continuous present, that is, an ever-continuous action: it happened, it is happening now and it will happen again.

In whichever moment, 'God comes.' The verb 'to come' appears here as a theological verb, indeed theological, since it says something about God's very nature. Proclaiming that 'God comes' is equivalent, therefore, to simply announcing God himself, through one of his essential and qualifying features: his being the God-who-comes.

Advent calls believers to become aware of this truth and to act accordingly.

It rings out as a salutary appeal in the days, weeks and months that repeat: Awaken! Remember that God comes! Not yesterday, not tomorrow, but today, now!

The one true God, 'the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,' is not a God who is there in Heaven, unconcerned with us and our history, but he is the-God-who-comes. He is a Father who never stops thinking of us and, in the extreme respect of our freedom, desires to meet us and visit us; he wants to come, to dwell among us, to stay with us. His 'coming' is motivated by the desire to free us from evil and death, from all that prevents our true happiness. God comes to save us.



The Fathers of the Church observe that the 'coming' of God—continuous and, as it were, co-natural with his very being—is centred in the two principal comings of Christ: his Incarnation and his glorious return at the end of time (cf. Cyril of Jerusalem, Catechesis 15,1: PG 33, 870).

The Advent Season lives the whole of this polarity. In the first days, the accent falls on the expectation of the Lord's Final Coming, as the texts of this evening's celebration demonstrate.

With Christmas approaching, the dominant note instead is on the commemoration of the event at Bethlehem, so that we may recognize it as the 'fullness of time.' Between these two 'manifested' comings it is possible to identify a third, which St. Bernard calls 'intermediate' and 'hidden,' and which occurs in the souls of believers and, as it were, builds a 'bridge' between the first and the last coming.

*Source: CatholicJournal.US -
The Grace of Advent (December
4, 2019)*



The First Week of Advent

“The Lord will come again”

Also known as the “prophecy candle,” the candle of hope for Advent assures us we can have hope that God will fulfill the prophecies declared in the Old Testament about Jesus.

Hope doesn't disappoint us (*Romans 5:5*)



SUNDAY OF THE

First Week of Advent

To you, I lift up my soul,
O my God.
In you, I have trusted; let me not be put to shame.
Nor let my enemies exult over me;
and let none who hope in you be put to shame.

(CF. Ps 24:1-3)

*A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Mark
(Mark 13:33-37)*

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Be on your guard, stay awake, because you never know when the time will come. It is like a man travelling abroad: he has gone from home, and left his servants in charge, each with his own task; and he has told the doorkeeper to stay awake. So stay awake, because you do not know when the master of the house is coming, evening, midnight, cockcrow, dawn; if he comes unexpectedly, he must not find you asleep. And what I say to you I say to all: Stay awake!'



ANTIPHONS

(Joel 3:18)

In that day the mountains shall drop down sweetness,
and the hills shall flow with milk and honey, alleluia.

(Zach 9:9)

Shout for joy, O daughter of Sion, rejoice greatly,
O daughter of Jerusalem, alleluia.

(Zach 14:5)

Behold, the Lord shall come, and all His Saints with
him: and there shall be in this day a great light,
alleluia.

(Isaiah 55:1)

All you that thirst come to the waters,
seek the Lord while He may be found, alleluia.

Behold there shall come the great Prophet,
and it is He that shall build Jerusalem anew,
alleluia.



MONDAY OF THE *First Week of Advent*

Hear the word of the Lord, O nations;
declare it to the distant lands:
Behold, our Saviour will come;
you need no longer fear. (CF. Jer 31:10; Is 35:4)

*A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew
(Mt 8:5-11)*

When Jesus went into Capernaum a centurion came up and pleaded with him. 'Sir,' he said 'my servant is lying at home paralysed, and in great pain.' 'I will come myself and cure him' said Jesus. The centurion replied, 'Sir, I am not worthy to have you under my roof; just give the word and my servant will be cured. For I am under authority myself, and have soldiers under me; and I say to one man: Go, and he goes; to another: Come here, and he comes; to my servant: Do this, and he does it.' When Jesus heard this he was astonished and said to those following him, 'I tell you solemnly, nowhere in Israel have I found faith like this. And I tell you that many will come from the east and west to take their places with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob at the feast in the kingdom of heaven.'

All-powerful Father,

I entrust to You my life and every situation in my life
that needs Your power and control.

Please bring order and harmony to my life
and to the lives of those around me.

May all Your children learn to more fully
entrust themselves to You as their loving God.

Jesus, I trust in You.
(Source of content: My Catholic Life)

Pray:
Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...



TUESDAY OF THE

First Week of Advent

Behold, the Lord will come,
and all his holy ones with him;
and on that day there will be a great light.

(CF. Zec 14:5,7)

*A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke
(Lk 10:21-24)*

Filled with joy by the Holy Spirit, Jesus said, 'I bless you, Father, Lord of heaven and of earth, for hiding these things from the learned and the clever and revealing them to mere children. Yes, Father, for that is what it pleased you to do. Everything has been entrusted to me by my Father; and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

Then turning to his disciples he spoke to them in private, 'Happy the eyes that see what you see, for I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see, and never saw it; to hear what you hear, and never heard it.'



My divine Lord,

I know You are alive today, speaking to me,
calling me and revealing to me Your glorious presence.

Help me to desire You and, within that desire,
to turn to You with all my heart.

I love You, my Lord.
Help me to love You more.

Jesus, I trust in You.
(Source of content: My Catholic Life)

Pray:
Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...



WEDNESDAY OF THE

First Week of Advent

The Lord will come and he will not delay.
He will illumine what is hidden in darkness
and reveal himself to all the nations.

(CF. Hab 2:3; 1 Cor 4:5)

*A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew
(Mt 15:29-37)*

Jesus reached the shores of the Sea of Galilee, and he went up into the hills. He sat there, and large crowds came to him bringing the lame, the crippled, the blind, the dumb and many others; these they put down at his feet, and he cured them. The crowds were astonished to see the dumb speaking, the cripples whole again, the lame walking and the blind with their sight, and they praised the God of Israel.

But Jesus called his disciples to him and said, 'I feel sorry for all these people; they have been with me for three days now and have nothing to eat. I do not want to send them off hungry, they might collapse on the way.' The disciples said to him, 'Where could we get enough bread in this deserted place to feed such a crowd?' Jesus said to them, 'How many loaves have you?' 'Seven' they said 'and a few small fish.' Then he instructed the crowd to sit down on the ground, and he took the seven loaves and the fish, and he gave thanks and broke them and handed them to the disciples who gave them to the crowds.

They all ate as much as they wanted, and they collected what was left of the scraps, seven baskets full.



My divine Lord,

I love You and desire to love You more.
Fill me with a wonder and awe for You.

Help me to desire You above all things and
in all things.

May my love of You become so intense that
I find myself trusting You always.

Help me, dear Lord, to make You the centre
of my entire life. Jesus, I trust in You.

(Source of content: My Catholic Life)

Pray:

Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...



THURSDAY OF THE

First Week of Advent

You, O Lord, are close,
and all your ways are truth.
From of old I have known of your decrees,
for you are eternal.
(*CF. Ps 118:151-152*)

*A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew
(Mt 7:21. 24-27)*

Jesus said to his disciples: 'It is not those who say to me, "Lord, Lord", who will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the person who does the will of my Father in heaven.

'Therefore, everyone who listens to these words of mine and acts on them will be like a sensible man who built his house on rock. Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and hurled themselves against that house, and it did not fall: it was founded on rock. But everyone who listens to these words of mine and does not act on them will be like a stupid man who built his house on sand. Rain came down, floods rose, gales blew and struck that house, and it fell; and what a fall it had!'



My saving God,

I pray for insight into my life.
Help me to see my life and all of my actions
in the light of Your will and Your Truth.

My loving Father,
I desire to live fully in accord with Your
perfect will. Give me the grace I need to
amend my life so that the day of judgment
is a day of the greatest glory.

Jesus, I trust in You.

(*Source of content: My Catholic Life*)

Pray:

Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...



FRIDAY OF THE *First Week of Advent*

Behold, the Lord will come
descending with splendour to visit his people with peace,
and he will bestow on them eternal life.

*A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew
(Mt 9:27-31)*

As Jesus went on his way two blind men followed him shouting, 'Take pity on us, Son of David.' And when Jesus reached the house the blind men came up with him and he said to them, 'Do you believe I can do this?' They said, 'Sir, we do.' Then he touched their eyes saying, 'Your faith deserves it, so let this be done for you.' And their sight returned. Then Jesus sternly warned them, 'Take care that no one learns about this.' But when they had gone, they talked about him all over the countryside.



My true and saving Lord,

I commit myself to You and pray that I will
come to know and love You as You are.

Give me the eyes I need to see You and the
mind and heart I need to know and love You.

Remove from me any false vision of who You
are and replace within me a true knowledge
of You, my Lord.

As I come to know You, I offer myself to You
so that You may use me to proclaim Your
greatness to all.

Jesus, I trust in You.

*Pray:
Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...*



SATURDAY OF THE *First Week of Advent*

Come and show us your face, O Lord,
who are seated upon the Cherubim, and will be saved
(Cf. Ps 79:4,2)

*A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew
(Mt 9:35—10:1.6-8)*

Jesus made a tour through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the Good News of the kingdom and curing all kinds of diseases and sickness.

And when he saw the crowds he felt sorry for them because they were harassed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is rich but the labourers are few, so ask the Lord of the harvest to send labourers to his harvest.'

He summoned his twelve disciples, and gave them authority over unclean spirits with power to cast them out and to cure all kinds of diseases and sickness. These twelve Jesus sent out, instructing them as follows: 'Go rather to the lost sheep of the House of Israel. And as you go, proclaim that the kingdom of heaven is close at hand. Cure the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, cast out devils. You received without charge, give without charge.'



My dear Lord,

I commit myself to Your divine mission.
I choose You and Your holy will for my life.

Send me, dear Lord, to those who are most in
need of your love and mercy.

Help me to know how I can bring that love and
mercy to those entrusted to me so that they
will experience in their lives Your glorious and
saving grace.

Jesus, I trust in You.

(Source of content: My Catholic Life)

Pray:

Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...





The Second Week of Advent

“Prepare the Way for the Lord”

The peace of God allows us to look at others through heaven’s eyes and help guide the world to see God’s here and not-yet here kingdom. Peace from God, biblical peace, allows us to trust in God’s promises (Proverbs 3:5), through restful, tranquil faith, despite the dark, uncertain world around us.



SUNDAY OF THE *Second Week of Advent*

O people of Sion, behold, the Lord will come to save the nations,
and the Lord will make the glory of his voice heard in the joy of your heart. *(CF. Is 30:19,30)*

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke (Lk 3:4. 6)

In the fifteenth year of Tiberius Caesar's reign, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judaea, Herod tetrarch of Galilee, his brother Philip tetrarch of the lands of Ituraea and Trachonitis, Lysanias tetrarch of Abilene, during the pontificate of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah, in the wilderness. He went through the whole Jordan district proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the sayings of the prophet Isaiah:

A voice cries in the wilderness;
Prepare a way for the Lord,
make his paths straight.
Every valley will be filled in,
every mountain and hill be laid low,
winding ways will be straightened
and rough roads made smooth.
And all mankind shall see that salvation of God.



ANTIPHONS

(Lk. 21:27) Behold, the Lord shall come in the clouds of heaven with great power, alleluia.

(Is. 26:1-2) Behold the Lord shall appear, and shall not lie: if He make delay wait for Him, for He shall come, and shall not tarry, alleluia.

(Is. 55:12) The mountains and the hills shall sing praise before God, and all the trees of the woods shall clap their hands, for the Lord of all that hath dominion shall come into His everlasting kingdom, alleluia, alleluia.

(Is. 40:10) Behold our Lord shall come with strength, and shall enlighten the eyes of His servants, alleluia.



MONDAY OF THE *Second Week of Advent*

Hear the word of the Lord, O nations;


declare it to the distant lands:

Behold, our Saviour will come; you need no longer fear. (CF. Jer 31:10; Is 35:4)

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke (Lk 5:17-26)

Jesus was teaching one day, and among the audience there were Pharisees and doctors of the Law who had come from every village in Galilee, from Judaea and from Jerusalem. And the Power of the Lord was behind his works of healing. Then some men appeared, carrying on a bed a paralysed man whom they were trying to bring in and lay down in front of him. But as the crowd made it impossible to find a way of getting him in, they went up on the flat roof and lowered him and his stretcher down through the tiles into the middle of the gathering, in front of Jesus. Seeing their faith he said, 'My friend, your sins are forgiven you.' The scribes and the Pharisees began to think this over. 'Who is this man talking blasphemy? Who can forgive sins but God alone?' But Jesus, aware of their thoughts, made them this reply, 'What are these thoughts you have in your hearts? Which of these is easier to say, "Your sins are forgiven you" or to say "Get up and walk?" But to prove to you that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins', – he said to the paralysed man – 'I order you: get up, and pick up your stretcher and go home.' And immediately before their very eyes he got up, picked up what he had been lying on and went home praising God.

They were all astounded and praised God, and were filled with awe, saying, 'We have seen strange things today.'



Lord, I turn to You in my need and repent of
the many lies and false promises of
satisfaction in this world.

Please free me from all that is not of You so
that my soul will be more fully prepared to
soak You and Your mercy up like a gentle rain
upon a dry and barren desert.

I open myself to You, my Lord.
Come fill and satiate my soul.

Jesus, I trust in You.

(Source of content: My Catholic Life)

Pray:

Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...



TUESDAY OF THE *Second Week of Advent*

Behold, the Lord will come,
and all his holy ones with him;
and on that day there will be a great light.
(*CF. Zec 14:5,7*)

*A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew
(Mt 18:12-14)*

Jesus said to his disciples: 'Tell me. Suppose a man has a hundred sheep and one of them strays; will he not leave the ninety-nine on the hillside and go in search of the stray? I tell you solemnly, if he finds it, it gives him more joy than do the ninety-nine that did not stray at all. Similarly, it is never the will of your Father in heaven that one of these little ones should be lost.'



My diligent Lord,

You seek me out, day and night, never tiring
of calling me to return more fully to Yourself.

Please help me to fill Your Heart with joy by
always responding to Your gentle invitations
of love and mercy.

Jesus, I trust in You.

(Source of content: My Catholic Life)

Pray:

Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...



WEDNESDAY OF THE *Second Week of Advent*

The Lord will come and he will not delay.
He will illumine what is hidden in darkness
and reveal himself to all the nations.
(*CF. Hab 2:3; 1 Cor 4:5*)

*A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew
(Mt 11:28-30)*

Jesus exclaimed, 'Come to me, all you who labour and are overburdened, and I will give you rest. Shoulder my yoke and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. Yes, my yoke is easy and my burden light.'



The Immaculata and the Terror of Demons
by Adonai Camilleri Cauchi (Malta-Gozo, 2019)
Commissioned by Fr. Donald Calloway, MIC
Available at www.consecrationtostjoseph.org

My loving Lord,

I accept Your invitation to come to You and rest
in Your glorious presence.

Draw me in, dear Lord, to Your heart that is
overflowing with grace and mercy.

Draw me into Your presence so that I may rest in You
and be delivered from the many burdens of life.

Jesus, I trust in You.

(*Source of content: My Catholic Life*)

Pray:

Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...



THURSDAY OF THE *Second Week of Advent*

You, O Lord, are close,
and all your ways are truth.
From of old I have known of your decrees,
for you are eternal.
(*CF. Ps 118:151-152*)

*A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew
(Mt 11:11-15)*

Jesus spoke to the crowds: 'I tell you solemnly, of all the children born of women, a greater than John the Baptist has never been seen; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he is. Since John the Baptist came, up to this present time, the kingdom of heaven has been subjected to violence and the violent are taking it by storm. Because it was towards John that all the prophecies of the prophets and of the Law were leading; and he, if you will believe me, is the Elijah who was to return. If anyone has ears to hear, let him listen!'



My glorious and victorious Lord,

I trust in You to pour forth Your grace
so that I may stand strong against the world,
the temptations of my flesh and the devil himself.

Give me courage, boldness and fortitude
so that I can fight the good fight of faith
and never waver from seeking You and
Your most holy will for my life.

Jesus, I trust in You.

(*Source of content: My Catholic Life*)

Pray:

Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...



FRIDAY OF THE *Second Week of Advent*

Behold, the Lord will come
descending with splendour to visit his people with peace,
and he will bestow on them eternal life.

*A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew
(Mt 11:16-19)*

Jesus spoke to the crowds: 'What description can I find for this generation? It is like children shouting to each other as they sit in the market place:

"We played the pipes for you,
and you wouldn't dance;
we sang dirges,
and you wouldn't be mourners"

'For John came, neither eating nor drinking, and they say, "He is possessed." The Son of Man came, eating and drinking, and they say, "Look, a glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners." Yet wisdom has been proved right by her actions.'



My glorious Lord Jesus,

I acknowledge Your divine presence in my life and in
the world all around me.

Help me to be more attentive to the countless ways
that You speak to me and come to me each and every
day. As I discover You and Your holy word, fill me
with joy.

As I see my sin and the sins of the world, give me
true sorrow so that I will work tirelessly to combat my
own sin and bring Your love and mercy to those who
are most in need.

Jesus, I trust in You.

(Source of content: My Catholic Life)

Pray:

Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...



SATURDAY OF THE *Second Week of Advent*

Come and show us your face, O Lord,
who are seated upon the Cherubim, and we will be saved.
(Cf. Ps 79:4.2)

*A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew
(Mt 17:10-13)*

As they came down from the mountain the disciples put this question to Jesus, 'Why do the scribes say that Elijah has to come first?' 'True' he replied; 'Elijah is to come to see that everything is once more as it should be; however, I tell you that Elijah has come already and they did not recognise him but treated him as they pleased; and the Son of Man will suffer similarly at their hands.' The disciples understood then that he had been speaking of John the Baptist.



My mysterious and beautiful Lord,

You have revealed to us the deepest and most profound mysteries of life through Your written Word.

May I always approach Your Word with humility and openness so that I will come to know You more fully.

Jesus, I trust in You.

(Source of content: My Catholic Life)

Pray:

Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...





The Third Week of Advent

“Rejoice in the Lord always”

Otherwise known as the Shepherd Candle, this third candle of Advent reflects the joy that comes through Jesus’ arrival, and through the salvation he has gifted us.



SUNDAY OF THE *Third Week of Advent*

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.

Indeed, the Lord is near.

(*CF. Is 30:19,30*)

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke

(*Lk 3:10-18*)

When all the people asked John, 'What must we do?' he answered, 'If anyone has two tunics he must share with the man who has none, and the one with something to eat must do the same.' There were tax collectors too who came for baptism, and these said to him, 'Master, what must we do?' He said to them, 'Exact no more than your rate.' Some soldiers asked him in their turn, 'What about us? What must we do?' He said to them, 'No intimidation! No extortion! Be content with your pay!'

A feeling of expectancy had grown among the people, who were beginning to think that John might be the Christ, so John declared before them all, 'I baptise you with water, but someone is coming, someone who is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to undo the strap of his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fan is in his hand to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his barn; but the chaff he will burn in a fire that will never go out.' As well as this, there were many other things he said to exhort the people and to announce the Good News to them.



ANTIPHONS

(I Cor. 4:5) The Lord will come, and will not tarry, and will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will manifest Himself to all the nations, alleluia.

(Is 52:9) Rejoice, O Jerusalem, with great joy, for there shall come unto thee a Saviour, alleluia.

(Is 46:12) I will give salvation in Sion, and my glory in Jerusalem, alleluia.

(Is. 40:4) The mountains and all the hills shall be made low: and the crooked shall become straight and the rough ways plain: Come, O Lord, and tarry not, alleluia.

Let us live justly and piously, looking for the blessed hope and the coming of the Lord.



MONDAY OF THE

Third Week of Advent

Hear the word of the Lord, O nations;
declare it to the distant lands:
Behold, our Saviour will come; you need no longer fear.
(*CF. Jer 31:10; Is 35:4*)

*A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew
(Mt 21:23-27)*

Jesus had gone into the Temple and was teaching, when the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him and said, 'What authority have you for acting like this? And who gave you this authority?' 'And I' replied Jesus 'will ask you a question, only one; if you tell me the answer to it, I will then tell you my authority for acting like this. John's baptism: where did it come from: heaven or man?' And they argued it out this way among themselves, 'If we say from heaven, he will retort, "Then why did you refuse to believe him?"; but if we say from man, we have the people to fear, for they all hold that John was a prophet.' So their reply to Jesus was, 'We do not know.' And he retorted, 'Nor will I tell you my authority for acting like this.'



My Lord of all truth,

give me the grace I need to stand firm on all that You have revealed to me. Give me courage to remain firm in the convictions of faith that have been given to me by You.

May I proclaim this faith to all whom I encounter so that I can be an instrument of Your love and mercy to the world.

Jesus, I trust in You.

(Source of content: My Catholic Life)

Pray:

Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...



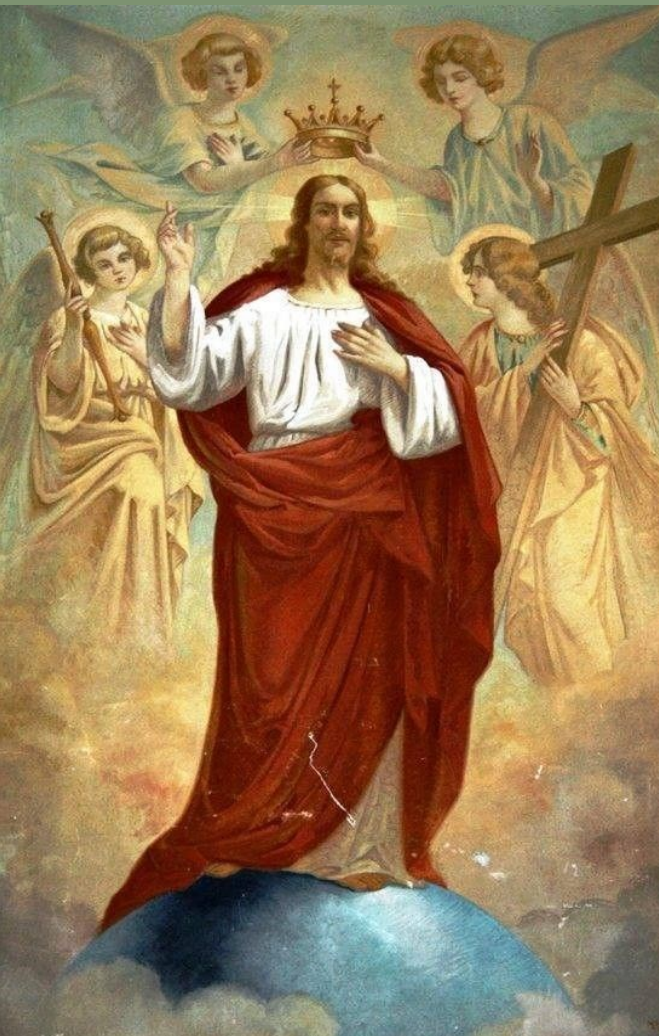
TUESDAY OF THE *Third Week of Advent*

Behold, the Lord will come, and all his holy ones with him;
and on that day there will be a great light.

(CF. Zec 14:5,7)

*A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew
(Mt 21:28-32)*

Jesus said to the chief priests and the elders of the people, 'What is your opinion? A man had two sons. He went and said to the first, "My boy, you go and work in the vineyard today." He answered, "I will not go," but afterwards thought better of it and went. The man then went and said the same thing to the second who answered, "Certainly, sir," but did not go. Which of the two did the father's will?' 'The first' they said. Jesus said to them, 'I tell you solemnly, tax collectors and prostitutes are making their way into the kingdom of God before you. For John came to you, a pattern of true righteousness, but you did not believe him, and yet the tax collectors and prostitutes did. Even after seeing that, you refused to think better of it and believe in him.'



Precious Lord,

give me the grace I need to respond to every prompting of grace in my life. Help me to say "Yes" to You and to follow through with my actions.

As I see more clearly the ways I have refused Your grace, give me courage and strength to change so as to more fully conform to Your perfect plan for my life.

Jesus, I trust in You.

(Source of content: My Catholic Life)

Pray:

Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...



WEDNESDAY OF THE *Third Week of Advent*

The Lord will come and he will not delay.
He will illumine what is hidden in darkness
and reveal himself to all the nations.
(*CF. Hab 2:3; 1 Cor 4:5*)

*A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke
(Lk 7:19-23)*

John, summoning two of his disciples, sent them to the Lord to ask, 'Are you the one who is to come, or must we wait for someone else?' When the men reached Jesus they said, 'John the Baptist has sent us to you, to ask, "Are you the one who is to come or have we to wait for someone else?" 'It was just then that he cured many people of disease and afflictions and of evil spirits, and gave the gift of sight to many who were blind. Then he gave the messengers their answer, 'Go back and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind can see again, the lame walk, lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised to life, the Good News is proclaimed to the poor and happy is the man who does not lose faith in me.'



Lord,

I thank You for the countless ways in which You have changed my life, healing me of my spiritual illnesses, opening my eyes and ears to Your truth, and raising my soul from death to life.

Use me, dear Lord, as a witness to Your transforming power. Help me to give testimony to You and Your perfect love so that others will come to know You through the way You have touched my life.

Jesus, I trust in You.
(*Source of content: My Catholic Life*)

Pray:
Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...



THURSDAY OF THE *Third Week of Advent*

You, O Lord, are close, and all your ways are truth.
From of old I have known of your decrees, for you are eternal.
(*CF. Ps 118:151-152*)

*A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke
(Lk 7:24-30)*

When John's messengers had gone Jesus began to talk to the people about John, 'What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed swaying in the breeze? No? Then what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? Oh no, those who go in for fine clothes and live luxuriously are to be found at court! Then what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and much more than a prophet: he is the one of whom scripture says: See, I am going to send my messenger before you. I tell you, of all the children born of woman, there is no greater than John: yet the least in the kingdom of God is greater than he is. All the people who heard him, and the tax collectors too, acknowledged God's plan by accepting baptism from John; but by refusing baptism from him the Pharisees and the lawyers had thwarted what God had in mind for them.'



My Divine Saviour,

I thank You for the awe-inspiring gift of grace You have given me, inviting me to actually share in Your divinity.

May I become more and more aware of this gift and become eternally grateful for all You have done for me.

Jesus, I trust in You.
(*Source of content: My Catholic Life*)

Pray:
Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...



FRIDAY OF THE *Third Week of Advent*

O Wisdom, you came forth from the mouth of the Most High and, reaching from beginning to end, you ordered all things mightily and sweetly. Come, and teach us the way of prudence.

A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew (Mt 1:1-17)

Abraham was the father of Isaac,
Isaac the father of Jacob,
Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers,
Judah was the father
of Perez and Zerah, Tamar being their mother,
Perez was the father of Hezron,
Hezron the father of Ram,
Ram was the father of Amminadab,
Amminadab was the father of Nahshon,
Nahshon the father of Salmon,
Salmon was the father of Boaz, Rahab being his mother,
Boaz was the father of Obed, Ruth being his mother,
Obed was the father of Jesse;
and Jesse was the father of King David.

David was the father of Solomon, whose mother had
been Uriah's wife,
Solomon was the father of Rehoboam,
Rehoboam the father of Abijah,
Abijah the father of Asa,
Asa was the father of Jehoshaphat,
Jehoshaphat the father of Joram,
Joram the father of Azariah,
Azariah was the father of Jotham,
Jotham the father of Ahaz,
Ahaz the father of Hezekiah,
Hezekiah was the father of Manasseh,
Manasseh the father of Amon,
Amon the father of Josiah;
and Josiah was the father of Jechoniah and his brothers.
Then the deportation to Babylon took place.

After the deportation to Babylon:
Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel,
Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel,
Zerubbabel was the father of Abiud,
Abiud the father of Eliakim,
Eliakim the father of Azor,
Azor was the father of Zadok,
Zadok the father of Achim,
Achim the father of Eliud,
Eliud was the father of Eleazar,
Eleazar the father of Matthan,
Matthan the father of Jacob;
and Jacob was the father of Joseph the husband of
Mary; of her was born Jesus who is called Christ.

The sum of generations is therefore: fourteen
from Abraham to David; fourteen from David to
the Babylonian deportation; and fourteen from
the Babylonian deportation to Christ.

Most holy Father in Heaven,

**I do desire to come to know You and
Your perfect and intimate love for me.**

**Please open my mind and heart to You
more fully this Advent season
so that I can turn from all fading and
passing lights of this world
and come to the one and profound
Light of Your loving Heart.**

Jesus, I trust in You.

(Source of content: My Catholic Life)

**Pray:
Our Father...Hail Mary...
Glory Be...**



SATURDAY OF THE *Third Week of Advent*

O Adonai and Ruler of the House of Israel, you appeared to Moses in the fire of the burning bush and on Mount Sinai gave him your law. Come, and with outstretched arm redeem us.

*A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Matthew
(Mt 1:18-24)*

This is how Jesus Christ came to be born. His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, but before they came to live together she was found to be with child through the Holy Spirit. Her husband Joseph, being a man of honour and wanting to spare her publicity, decided to divorce her informally. He had made up his mind to do this when the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, 'Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because she has conceived what is in her by the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son and you must name him Jesus, because he is the one who is to save his people from their sins.' Now all this took place to fulfil the words spoken by the Lord through the prophet:

The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son
and they will call him Emmanuel, a name which means 'God-is-with-us'.

When Joseph woke up he did what the angel of the Lord had told him to do: he took his wife to his home.



Most glorious Saint Joseph,

you were a man of true righteousness and integrity. You were open to the inspired gift of faith and chose to walk by that faith as you faced the greatest of mysteries.

Please pray for me that I may learn from you and be inspired to imitate the life that you lived. Saint Joseph, pray for us.

Jesus, I trust in You.

(Source of content: My Catholic Life)

Pray:

Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory Be...



The Fourth Week of Advent

“O Come O Come Emmanuel”

Because of Joseph’s love for Mary, he didn’t abandon her when he found out she was pregnant. Mary has a natural motherly love for Jesus, and ultimately, we see God’s love for everyone by sending his son for us



SUNDAY OF THE *Fourth Week of Advent*

*O Root of Jesse, you stand as a sign for the peoples;
before you kings shall keep silence and to you all nations shall have recourse.
Come, save us, and do not delay.*

*A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke
(Lk 1:39-45)*

Mary set out and went as quickly as she could to a town in the hill country of Judah. She went into Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. Now as soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. She gave a loud cry and said, 'Of all women you are the most blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord? For the moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leapt for joy. Yes, blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled.'



ANTIPHONS

(Joel 2:1) Blow ye the trumpet in Sion, for the day of the Lord is near: behold He shall come to save us, alleluia, alleluia!

(Agg. 2:8) Behold the Desired of all nations shall come: and the house of the Lord shall be filled with glory, alleluia.

(Is. 40:4) The crooked shall become straight, and the rough ways plain: come, O Lord, and tarry not, alleluia.

(Is. 9:6) The Lord shall come, go forth to meet Him, saying: Great is His sovereignty, and of His kingdom there shall be no end: God the mighty, the Lord, the Prince of peace, alleluia, alleluia.

(Wis. 18:15) Thine almighty Word, O Lord, shall come forth from Thy royal throne, alleluia.





St. Andrew Christmas Novena

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Hail, and blessed be the hour and moment at which the Son of God was born of a most pure Virgin at a stable at midnight in Bethlehem in the piercing cold. At that hour vouchsafe, I beseech Thee, to hear my prayers and grant my desires.

(Mention your intentions here)

Through Jesus Christ and His most Blessed Mother. Amen.

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

Traditionally, this prayer is prayed 15 times each day for the duration of the Novena.

Pope St. John XXIII Christmas Prayer

O sweet Child of Bethlehem, grant that we may share with all our hearts in this profound mystery of Christmas.

Put into the hearts of men and women this peace for which they sometimes seek so desperately and which you alone can give to them.

Help them to know one another better, and to live as brothers and sisters, children of the same Father. Reveal to them also your beauty, holiness and purity.

Awaken in their hearts love and gratitude for your infinite goodness.


Join them all together in your love. And give us your heavenly peace. Amen.

Prayer for Christmas

A Root shall come forth from the stock of Jesse And a Flower shall rise out of his root!
And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon Him the spirit of wisdom and of understanding,
the spirit of counsel and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and of godliness.

The people that walked in darkness shall see a great light, For a Child is born to us and a Son is given to us. To Him all power shall be given.

His Name shall be: Wonderful One, Strong God, Eternal One, Prince of Peace.
He shall sit on the throne of David, And He will found a new Covenant which will last for ever and ever. Amen.



Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, have mercy on us.
Lord, have mercy on us.
Christ, hear us. Christ, graciously hear us.

God the Father of Heaven,
Have mercy on us.
God the Son, Redeemer of the world,
Have mercy on us.
God the Holy Spirit,
Have mercy on us.
Holy Trinity, One God,
Have mercy on us.

Holy Mary, **pray for us.**
Saint Joseph, **pray for us.**
Illustrious son of David, **pray for us.**
Light of the patriarchs, **pray for us.**
Spouse of the Mother of God, **pray for us.**
Chaste guardian of the Virgin, **pray for us.**
Foster-father of the Son of God, **pray for us.**
Watchful defender of Christ, **pray for us.**
Head of the Holy Family, **pray for us.**
Joseph most just, **pray for us.**
Joseph most chaste, **pray for us.**
Joseph most prudent, **pray for us.**
Joseph most valiant, **pray for us.**
Joseph most obedient, **pray for us.**
Joseph most faithful, **pray for us.**
Mirror of patience, **pray for us.**
Lover of poverty, **pray for us.**
Model of workmen, **pray for us.**
Glory of domestic life, **pray for us.**
Guardian of virgins, **pray for us.**
Pillar of families, **pray for us.**
Solace of the afflicted, **pray for us.**
Hope of the sick, **pray for us.**
Patron of the dying, **pray for us.**
Terror of demons, **pray for us.**
Protector of Holy Church, **pray for us.**

Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world,
Spare us, O Lord.
Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world,
Graciously hear us, O Lord.
Lamb of God, Who takes away the sins of the world,
Have mercy on us.

V. He made him the lord of His household,
R. And prince over all His possessions.

Let Us Pray.

O God, Who in Thine ineffable providence did choose Blessed Joseph to be the spouse of Thy most Holy Mother, grant that as we venerate him as our protector on earth, we may deserve to have him as our intercessor in Heaven, You Who lives and reigns forever and ever. **R.** Amen.

Litany of St. Joseph



Creator of the Stars of Night

Latin: Creator alme siderum

Creator of the stars of night,
Thy people's everlasting light,
Jesu, Redeemer, save us all,
And hear Thy servants when they call.

Thou, grieving that the ancient curse
Should doom to death a universe,
Hast found the medicine, full of grace,
To save and heal a ruined race.

Thou cam'st, the Bridegroom of the bride,
As drew the world to evening-tide;
Proceeding from a virgin shrine,
The spotless victim all divine.

At whose dread name, majestic now,
All knees must bend, all hearts must bow;
And things celestial Thee shall own,
And things terrestrial, Lord alone.

O Thou whose coming is with dread
To judge and doom the quick and dead,
Preserve us, while we dwell below,
From every insult of the foe.

To God the Father, God the Son,
And God the Spirit, Three in One,
Laud, honour, might, and glory be
From age to age eternally.

1 Cónditor alme síderum,
æténa lux credéntium,
Christe, redémpTOR ómnium,
exáudi preces súpplicum.

2 Qui cóndolens intéritu
mortis períre sæculum,
salvásti mundum lánguidum,
donans reis remédium.

3 Vergénte mundi vésperé,
uti sponsus de thálamó,
egréssus honestíssima
Víriginis matris cláusula.

4 Cuius forti poténtiæ
genu curvántur ómnia;
cæléstia, terréstria
nutu faténtur súbdita.

5 Te, Sancte, fide quæsumus,
ventúre iudex sæculi,
consérva nos in témpore
hostis a telo pérfidí.

6 Sit, Christe, rex píssime,
tibi Patríque glória
cum Spírítu Paráclito,
in sempitérna sæcula. Amen

Traditional 7th Century Hymn translated into English by J.M Neale in 1852



Stay Connected!

Wishing you, your families and your loved ones,
many blessings throughout these Advent and Christmas Seasons.

Please join Holy Cross Parish in celebrating the
Solemnity of Christmas.

We look forward to seeing you at our churches.

For more information about Christmas Mass Times
and other celebrations, connect with us:

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