



LET'S BE SAINTS

Advent 2025

Happy New Year!!

The liturgical season of Advent is the beginning of the Catholic Church's calendar. It is a season of preparation for the second coming of Christ and the celebration of Jesus Christ's birthday.

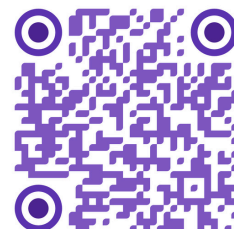
Our bishops give us some insight into the beauty of this season: "From the earliest days of the Church, people have been fascinated by Jesus' promise to come back. But the scripture readings during Advent tell us not to waste our time with predictions. Advent is not about speculation. Our Advent readings call us to be alert and ready, not weighted down and distracted by the cares of this world (Lk 21:34-36). Like Lent, the liturgical color for Advent is purple since both are seasons that prepare us for great feast days. Advent also includes an element of penance in the sense of preparing, quieting, and disciplining our hearts for the full joy of Christmas" (uscgb.org).

Our theme for Advent this year, Let's Be Saints, continues our parish's journey to help one another get to heaven. Let's work together to prepare our hearts to celebrate Christ's birthday, to anticipate his second coming, and to look forward to when we will celebrate this wonderful feast as saints in heaven.

We hope that the included materials will help make this a meaningful Advent for you and your family.

May God bless you,
The Faith Formation Team

*Watch "How to Advent"
from Formed.org to further your
prayerful preparations*



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

The Catholic New Year begins on the first Sunday of Advent. This year that is November 30, 2025.

Just like you might do for the calendar year, consider having a New Year's Party or making New Year's Resolutions for your faith life. These resolutions could be just for you or for your whole family.

What new spiritual practice might God be asking you to try out?



In your bundle, you will find an ornament which has a title of Jesus on it along with a piece of purple yarn.

For each person in your home, cut one piece of yarn and tie onto the ornament as a symbol of each person's intention for Advent. You can share your intentions with one another or keep them private.

On Christmas morning, cut the purple yarn off and throw away, symbolizing entrusting these intentions to God's care and letting go of that burden.

Bambinelli Sunday

Bambinelli Sunday is an Italian tradition which happens on the Third Sunday of Advent each year. It even happens at the Vatican!

Bring Your Baby Jesus figurine from home to St. Maria Goretti on December 13 or 14 to get it blessed. Then tuck him away safely until placing Him in your Nativity Scene on Christmas morning.



LET'S BE SAINTS

Advent 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30 <i>First Sunday of Advent</i> St. Andrew	1	2	3 St. Francis Xavier	4	5 Stations of the Creche 6p	6 St. Nicolas
7 <i>Second Sunday of Advent</i> St. Ambrose St. Nick's Breakfast Following 8a & 10a Mass	8 <i>Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary</i> (Holy Day of Obligation)	9 St. Juan Diego	10	11 Encounter: Advent Musical Holy Hour 7p	12 <i>Our Lady of Guadalupe</i> Stations of the Creche 6p	13 St. Lucy Christmas Food Drive Deliveries Christmas Caroling
14 <i>Third Sunday of Advent</i> St. John of the Cross	15	16	17	18 Penance Service 7p	19 Stations of the Creche 6p	20
21 <i>Fourth Sunday of Advent</i>	22	23	24	25 <i>Merry Christmas!</i> (Holy Day of Obligation)		

St. Maria Goretti Mass Times

Additional Penance Services

Lord's Day Mass Schedule

Saturday 4:30 PM

Sunday 8:00 AM 10:00 AM 5:30 PM

Daily Mass Schedule

Mon Fri 7:00 AM

Mon Thu 5:30 PM

Tues Wed Fri Sat 8:00 AM

St. Maria Goretti

Reconciliation Times

Wed 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM

Sat 8:30 AM to 9:30 AM

3:00 PM to 4:00 PM

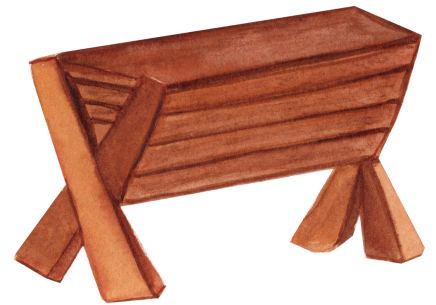
And by appointment

Advent: A Season of Preparation and Penance

Did you know that during Advent we are called to penance and sacrifice just like during Lent? Many times we focus so much on Advent as a season of preparation and waiting for Jesus to come that we forget about this penitential side. One tradition which can help us remember both parts of Advent - preparation and penance - is that of the Giving Manger or a Birthday Box.

The Giving Manger

At the beginning of the season, set out an empty manger. This can be a simple wooden box or basket or whatever you have on hand. Each time someone in your family does a good deed or makes a sacrifice, they get to place a piece of straw in the manger. These actions are the best presents we can give Jesus because we are loving others as he would. Our goal is to create a soft place for Jesus to be laid on Christmas morning. So the more good deeds and sacrifices done, the comfier his bed becomes.



Birthday Box

At the beginning of Advent, wrap an empty box like a present. Cut an opening in the top. Throughout Advent, as you do these good deeds and sacrificial acts, write them on a slip of paper and put in the box. On Christmas morning, open the box and read through all the gifts your family prepared for Christ.

The empty manger or box is a symbol for our hearts. Just as we are preparing Jesus' bed or birthday present, we also need to be preparing our hearts for his coming in order that we might welcome him with love.

These actions of penance and preparation help us to look to Christmas with joyful anticipation and hope for the coming of Christ.

Possible good deed and sacrifice ideas for your manger or box

- Hold the door open for someone
- Give away toys you don't use or play with anymore
- Make a donation to the Food Pantry
- Do a job around the house without being told
- Let your brother or sister pick the book to read or show to watch
- Downgrade your special coffee to a plain one and donate the money saved
- Take an Angel tag off the Giving Tree in the narthex and purchase the item requested to donate
- Send someone a card
- Ask someone how you can pray for them

Let's be Saints

To help encourage one another on this path to sainthood by keeping Christ at the center of your celebrations, take a picture, share it on social media and tag St. Maria Goretti.

Another Birthday Celebration Idea

Make a birthday cake or dessert to eat on Christmas Day



Advent Wreath

Did you know?



The wreath is circular to symbolize God's never-ending love for us.

It is made out of evergreen branches to symbolize our everlasting new life in Christ.

The four candles mark the four weeks of Advent (Hope, Peace, Joy, Love).

The color violet (dark purple) reminds us that this is a season of penance and preparation.

The color rose (pink) is supposed to be a lighter shade of the purple to represent a moment of joy that we are more than halfway to Christmas.

The flames remind us of the coming light of Christ.

A fifth white candle might be added (or the four violet and rose candles replaced with white) and lit on Christmas to symbolize the arrival of Light of Christ.

the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it
~John 1:5

While the Advent Wreath is a symbol of the season and the lit candles helps to countdown until Christmas, this visual reminder also invites us to spend time preparing our hearts for the upcoming celebration.

As you light the candles of your Advent Wreath, take time personally or as a family to pray. You can use the Scripture, questions, and prayers below as a guide. Sharing prayer intentions is also a beautiful addition.

First Week of Advent: Hope

- "Take heed, watch, and pray. For you do not know when the time will come." ~Mark 13:33
- How did you watch for Jesus today?
- *Dear Lord, help us to watch for You in all the little parts of our days. Fill us with hope as we think of the plans You have for us. Amen.*

Second Week of Advent: Peace

- "Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight." ~Mark 1:3
- How can our family prepare a place for Jesus?
- *Jesus, help make our home a place of peace this Advent as we prepare for Your coming. Amen.*

Third Week of Advent: Joy

- "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He was not the light, but came to bear witness to the light." ~John 1:6,8
- How can we be a light to people around us?
- *Father, You sent Your Son to bring light to the world. Help our family to be a light of joy too! Amen.*

Fourth Week of Advent: Love

- "You will conceive in your womb and bear a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus." ~Luke 1:31
- How can we make our lives a gift to Jesus?
- *Holy Spirit, fill our hearts with love so that we can share the gift of Jesus with everyone we meet, especially during the Christmas Season. Amen.*