



MONTHLY THEME
The Coming of Jesus
Monthly Virtue:
Self-Denial



MOMS IN NEED
Celebrating five
years of assistance
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Our Patron

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER
Why his Feast is
important. See page 6

The Bell Ringer

ST. FRANCIS XAVIER, HYANNIS + DECEMBER 2025

Our Lady of Guadalupe and Advent

By Janet M. Daly

The feast day of Our Lady of Guadalupe is celebrated December 12 each year, but we at St. Francis Xavier have been celebrating her at our church since late October, when an exact replica of St. Juan Diego's tilma was presented as a gift to the parish from our Spanish Community. Her presence has provided comfort and hope to many of our parishioners.

Her presence brings to mind some words she spoke to St. Juan: "Listen, my son, to what I tell you now; do not be troubled nor disturbed by anything; do not fear illness nor any other distressing occurrence, nor pain. Am I not your mother? Am I not life and health? Have I not placed you on my lap and made you my responsibility? Do you need anything else?"

As the Empress of the Americas so proclaimed by Pius XII, Our Lady is a much loved mother to all our parish communities, especially during the these times.

Pope Pius XII said: "Hail, O Virgin of Guadalupe, Empress of America! Keep forever under your powerful patronage the purity and integrity of Our Holy Faith on the entire American continent." He then asked us to pray three Hail Mary's daily for the Americas — one each for North, Central and South America. Plus those parishioners who prayed Cardinal

Burke's novena and those who were consecrated last year to Our Lady of Guadalupe have a daily prayer they have prayed since the last feast day on December 12, 2024 requesting to be her messenger daily as St. Juan Diego was and requesting her Son for the conversion of sinners.

Now installed in Our Lady's Shrine, the tilma also focuses on the Culture of Life because Our Lady of Guadalupe is presented as the pregnant mother-to-be of God. During this Advent season, what more perfect image for us could there be for we who are "pregnant" in anticipation of the coming of the Messiah.

Cardinal Burke's Thoughts

Raymond Leo Cardinal Burke, who led the construction of the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in LaCrosse, WI, had these words to say in her honor on her feast in 2013.

"The cause of our joy today is the truth which the Virgin Mother of God, Our Lady of Guadalupe, announced to St. Juan Diego at the very beginning of her apparitions to him from December 9th to 12th of 1531:

"Know, know for sure my dearest and youngest son, that I am truly the ever perfect Holy Virgin Mary, who has the honor to be the Mother of the one true God for whom we live, the Creator of people, (*Continued on page 2*)

Our Lady of Guadalupe. . . *Continued from page one*

the Lord of all around us and of what is close to us, the Lord of Heaven, the Lord of Earth.’

“From the symbols imprinted upon her most beautiful garment, St. Juan Diego knew that she was with child and from her words he understood that the Child was God the Son Incarnate in her womb. . .” the Cardinal noted.

Our Lady’s Presence in Advent

During Advent, we are preparing for the birth of Our Lord and this feast day allows us to join with His Blessed Mother, as she too awaits His birth. As Maxwell Johnson, professor emeritus at the University of Notre Dame and a contributor to the *Catholic Life Journal* in “The Virgin of Guadalupe and the Season of Advent” wrote:

“I would like to suggest that the Virgin of Guadalupe belongs in a particular way to our Advent preparations because, like Mary herself in her great New Testament hymn of God’s praise, the *Magnificat*, she proclaims to us the Gospel, the Good News of our salvation in Christ, the Good News of God who scatters the proud, exalts the lowly, fills the hungry with good things, and remembers His promises to Abraham and His children for ever.

. . . “How appropriate, then, that we celebrate Mary of Guadalupe in Advent. For what is Advent all about? On the official Roman Catholic (and contemporary Protestant) liturgical level, the season of Advent is primarily concerned with Christ’s coming again at the end of time and only secondarily with his first coming. . . .

“The story and the image of Guadalupe are really about incarnation, about the word becoming flesh, the incarnation of the Gospel, the Good News of God’s salvation among us here in this land, and about who we are and who we are to become as Church in the world. Mary of Guadalupe, pregnant with the Incarnate Word about to be born, belongs to our Advent reflections because Mary belongs in a special way to Advent for the simple reason that her Son seeks always to be born anew in us.

“For she too — like John the Baptizer, who comes as God’s messenger to prepare the way before the Christ who is coming — also comes as God’s messenger, inviting us to give Him a home in which to be born again among us this year and every year. But, as the ‘woman clothed with the sun,’ Mary of Guadalupe also reflects the overall eschatological focus of Advent as well. She belongs in a special way to Advent, then, because she is able to hold together both orientations of the season, the incarnational and the eschatological.” +

The New Shrine of the Holy Family

For so many years we have prayed before the statue of Our Lady which graced the shrine in the East wing of the Church. Mary has now joined her most chaste spouse, St. Joseph, who is holding the Christ Child, in the West wing, creating a Shrine to the Holy Family.

As Philip Kosloski noted in an *Aleteia* newsletter, Our Lady of Fatima told Sister Lucia, one of the three Fatima children, that there would be a “final battle” over marriage and the family. Lucia told this in a letter to an Italian cardinal. “Cardinal Carlo Caffarra revealed these prophetic words in an interview with *Aleteia* in

2017, explaining how he had received a handwritten note from Sister Lucia that ended: ‘Father, a time will come when the decisive battle between the kingdom of Christ and Satan will be over marriage and the family. And those who will work for the good of the family will experience persecution and tribulation. But do not be afraid, because Our Lady has already crushed his head.’”

This new shrine now allows us to pray for all families, aware of the final words of the letter: “Do not be afraid, because **Our Lady has already crushed his head.**” +



Respect for Life Corner



By Rebecca Minninger

Walking with Moms in Need is celebrating its 5th anniversary. This is the ministry launched by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in 2020. It was inspired by St. John Paul II's pro-life encyclical *The Gospel of Life*.

Since then, Catholics in diocese and parishes across the United States have put this encyclical into action through the Walking with Moms in Need ministry. Its mission is to “surround pregnant and parenting mothers in need with loving support and personal accompaniment. Heroic volunteers have stepped forward to make our parishes places where a mother can be connected with meaningful resources and assistance and, most importantly, know that she and her baby are not alone.”

Yes, we too, at St. Francis Xavier Parish, have a Walking with Moms ministry! Our phone number is on the cover of every bulletin. The infancy of our program began in October of 2021 after the Baby Bottle Drive. Several concerned parishioners met with Father Michael, and, with his input began our own Respect Life Steering Committee which has developed over time. We began holding parish educational events, trips to Attleboro to pray for life outside the abortion clinic, the monthly Rosary for Life.

By December 2022 we began surveying local services for pregnant women and preparing our own website.

After Massachusetts Senator Julian Cyr received a large amount of money to pay for abortion services on Cape Cod, our Respect Life Team announced at all Masses in March 2023 that we at St. Francis Xavier Parish were

starting a Walking with Moms Ministry, complete with a website and confidential phone line. We trained 12 Volunteer Sponsors in a six-week program. We created a Walking with Moms pamphlet in three languages. In July of 2023, the Your Options Medical Clinic came to Hyannis after the Cape Cod ProLife Alliance partnered with them. This local pregnancy resource center helps moms in immediate need and will refer to Walking with Moms if appropriate.

In April of 2024, we helped our first client over a period of several months. In July, we were instrumental in assisting a young mom find a situation in which she and her baby could thrive. Other young women have benefitted from our services. We continue to reach out to women with our pamphlets, tear offs, and our prayers. We are just now beginning to start using social media to extend our reach.

Our Catholic faith compels us to reach out to, and to accompany these women in their need because “every parish has something unique that God is calling them to contribute to the Church’s efforts to transform our society into a culture of life and a civilization of love.”

Please let us pray for women in these circumstances, especially at Christmas, to know there is help from Walking with Moms, and, for our Ministry to connect with and assist them. Come join us to pray the Rosary for Life on the 3rd Friday of each month at 7 pm! Volunteer to put up tear offs and distribute pamphlets by calling our help line 774-534-2185, or to make a referral for a Mom in Need. +

O Blessed Mother, you received the good news of the incarnation of Christ, your Son, with faith and trust. Grant your protection to all pregnant mothers facing difficulties. Amen.

The Christmas Season

It Begins on December 25 and Ends on January 11

USCCB — Christmas is one of the most important days of the Church year, second only to Easter itself. Celebrating the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is the culmination of the mystery of the Incarnation, the feast of God becoming flesh (the Latin "in carne" means "enfleshment"). It is a uniquely Christian teaching, the Divine choosing to become one of us. Because of this belief, God is not only Transcendent, but also wholly Immanent, Emmanuel (God-with-us). While remaining Transcendent (meaning we must rise above our present condition to reach Him), He is at the same time Immanent (meaning He is with us as we rise toward Him). Every Eucharist is like Christmas where the bread and wine are transformed into His flesh, His Body and Blood, and, in a sense, He is born anew on the altar.

The liturgical season of Christmas begins with the vigil Masses on Christmas Eve and concludes on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord. During this season, we celebrate the birth of Christ into our world and into our hearts and reflect on the gift of salvation that is born with Him, including the fact that He was born to die for us.

How It Begins

The announcement of the Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord from the *Roman Martyrology* draws upon Sacred Scripture to declare in a formal way the birth of Christ. It begins with creation and relates the birth of the Lord to the major events and personages of sacred and secular history. The particular events contained in the announcement help pastorally to situate the birth of Jesus in the context of salvation history. [text at right]

The Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, may be chanted or recited on December 24,

during the celebration of the Liturgy of the Hours. It may also be chanted or recited before the beginning of Midnight Mass. +

The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ

*The Twenty-fifth Day of December,
when ages beyond number had run their
course from the creation of the world,
when God in the beginning created heaven
and earth, and formed man
in His own likeness;
when century upon century had passed
since the Almighty set His bow in the clouds
after the Great Flood,
as a sign of covenant and peace;
in the twenty-first century since Abraham,
our father in faith,
came out of Ur of the Chaldees;
in the thirteenth century since the People of
Israel were led by Moses
in the Exodus from Egypt;
around the thousandth year since David was
anointed King;
in the sixty-fifth week of the prophecy of
Daniel; in the
one hundred and ninety-fourth Olympiad;
in the year seven hundred and fifty-two
since the foundation of the City of Rome;
in the forty-second year of the reign of Caesar
Octavian Augustus,
the whole world being at peace,
JESUS CHRIST, eternal God and Son of the
eternal Father, desiring to consecrate the
world by His most loving presence,
was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
and when nine months had passed since His
conception, was born of the Virgin Mary in
Bethlehem of Judah, and was made man:*

*The Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ
according to the flesh.*

Ideas for Advent

The Eight Stations of Advent
by Father John Bartunek, RC
Spirituality

You have probably prayed the Stations of the Cross many times, this booklet provides a similar form with the Eight Stations of Advent. The intro explains the elements of each Station and how to use them. Also included are the O Antiphons. Available at RC Spirituality website.

33 Days to the Holy Family, Consecration to Jesus, Mary, and Joseph by Father Donald H. Galloway, MIC & Scott L. Smith, Jr., ShopMercy.org/b68

God knew the great confusion that would occur in modern times. The Holy Family serves as the pattern and model for marriage and family, masculinity and fatherhood, femininity and motherhood, babies and children. This book is a blueprint for a happy and holy civilization.

Best Advent Ever featuring
Matthew Kelly of Dynamic Catholic, based on the book, "Slow Down to the Speed of Joy"

This is a short, daily email program presented by Dynamic Catholic. When you sign up, each day of Advent you will receive two short videos right to your inbox with inspirations from Matthew Kelly. The first video gives practical tips that help you to slow down and find true peace during this very busy season. The second video gives relevant wisdom to help focus on what matters most. Free. Just visit BestAdventEver.com to sign up.

The Christmas season is hardly the time when we decide to practice selflessness and self-denial, but when we think about what the meaning of Christmas is all about, we have a change of heart.



Certainly the Incarnation gives us the perfect example of self-denial by Our God — not to mention His unparalleled love for us — who chose to become human so as to save us who believe in Him and provide us with how to truly focus on what is above and not below.

One of our favorite authors, St. Alphonse Ligouri, in *The Art of Christian Living*, asks a provoking question: “And you, Christian soul, what have you done for your Divine Redeemer?” . . .

“Does God ask too much when He desires the soul to love nothing but Him? ‘No,’ says St. Bonaventure, ‘God is infinitely amiable and supremely good, deserving of our undivided love; He is perfectly right when He desires that a heart which He has created, should belong to Him alone; and since He has given Himself in sacrifice for us, He has acquired a still greater claim to our undivided love.’

“In order to attain to the perfect love of God it is necessary, moreover, to deny oneself by gladly embracing what is opposed to self-love, and refusing oneself what self-love demands. One day when St. Teresa was sick, they brought her a very palatable dish; the Saint would not touch it. The attendant urged her to eat, saying that the dish was well-prepared. ‘That’s just the reason I abstain from eating it,’ replied the Saint. And so with us; what pleases us most, in that we must deny ourselves, and just because it pleases us. For example, we must turn our eyes away from this or that object because it is beautiful; deny ourselves this or that pleasure because it is most agreeable to us; do a service to an ungrateful person just because he is ungrateful; take a bitter medicine just because it is bitter.

“According to St. Francis de Sales, our self-love wants to have a share in everything, even in things the most holy. For this very reason, says the Saint, we must love even virtue without attachment. For example, it is necessary to love prayer and solitude; but when obedience or charity prevent us from devoting ourselves to prayer and solitude we should not be disquieted, but accept resignedly everything that happens by the will of God to thwart our inclinations. . . . “The . . . means of acquiring the treasure of God’s love is prayer. The constant prayer of a Christian soul must be: ‘Jesus, give me Thy holy love; Mary my Mother, obtain for me the love of God; my Guardian Angel and all my holy patrons, intercede for me that I may love my God with my whole heart and soul.’ The Lord is generous in the bestowal of His gifts; but He is especially bountiful in giving His love to those who seek it.” +

The Feast of St. Francis Xavier

Our Parish Patron Saint's Life Is Pictured in the West Wing of the Church.

His Feast Day is December 3rd. Pray His Novena.

Our parish patron saint was an extraordinary young man — he died at 46 — having traveled thousands of miles to save souls, reportedly personally baptizing 50,000 souls on his missionary travels.. His life story is pictured in the stained glass windows in the West wing of the church.

After graduating from the University of Paris and teaching he met and was influenced by a compatriot and fellow student, St. Ignatius of Loyola. Loyola had gathered about him a little band of seven men who, in 1534 formed themselves into the Society of Jesus, dedicated to the service of God. Francis was one of the founding members.

St. Francis Xavier was named by Pope Plus X as the patron saint of foreign missions. He was the first missionary to the Orient in modern times. On St. Francis' 35th birthday, he set sail joining with an expedition bound for Goa, an island off the west coast of India.

According to reports, he took all on board under his spiritual care. He catechized the sailors, said Mass and preached on deck every Sunday. He settled quarrels and when scurvy broke out on board, he helped tend the sick. It took five months to reach Mozambique, sailing round the Cape of Good Hope from Portugal and the expedition wintered and rested there for six months. He landed in Goa on May 6, 1542, thirteen months later.

The Portuguese had established themselves in Goa 30 years prior to Francis' arrival. There were churches, clergy, even a bishop, but over the years the majority of the Portuguese had fallen away from the Church and their subsequent unsavory behavior aliented the natives from the faith.

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So he focused on instructing the Portuguese themselves in the fundamentals of the faith and devoted most of his time to teaching the children. He spent his mornings tending and comforting those in hospital and in prison. After that, he walked through the streets, ringing a bell to call the children and servants to Catechism. Thus the reason for the name of this newsletter. As the children gathered around him, he led them into the church and taught them prayers, about the sacraments and the Catholic faith.

With local clergy ready to serve the converts, Francis now sought new frontiers.

With several native clergy from Goa's seminary, he set sail for the Pearl Fishery Coast, where 10 years earlier the natives had been converted to please the Portuguese who had helped them overcome their Mohammedan enemies. But for lack of ongoing religious instruction had returned to their superstitions.

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Stained glass window of Francis Xavier listening to St. Ignatius of Loyola

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First he set out to learn the language of the Paravas, then instructed those who had been baptized, then preached to those not baptized. He was so successful in his mission, that at times he was almost too weary to move his arms. Thus the 10 year missionary travels of St. Francis began. He planted the Catholic faith in western and southern India, in the uncharted islands of the Indian Ocean, and in Japan.

Many incidents are told of St. Francis' conversion of notorious European sinners during these travels. His bravery in standing up physically for his people on several occasions and locations, even a tale of bringing someone back to life, and of course, his numerous baptisms.

The End

St. Francis died on an island off the China mainland, while making a valiant effort to bring Christ to its people. He was deserted by the ship's sailors who were afraid of offending a high Portuguese official and left him lying on the shore exposed to a piercing wind. He was carried by natives to one of their huts. Lonely and deserted, Francis prayed ceaselessly when not delirious. His last words with his eyes fixed on his crucifix were murmured: "In Thee, O Lord, have I put my hope. Let me never be confounded." He died on December 3, 1552.

The next evening, he was buried in a shallow grave with just a few followers on hand. The following February, his body was removed to Malacca, then onto Goa, and there it still lies enshrined in the Church of the Good Jesus. He was canonized in 1622 along with St. Ignatius of Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits. +

Novena Prayer Honoring Francis

Traditionally this novena has been prayed twice during the year. The first novena runs from March 4 to March 12, the second from November 25 to December 3. There is an indulgence of 300 days for its recitation.

O Great Saint Francis, well beloved and full of charity, with thee I reverently adore the Divine Majesty; and since I specially rejoice in the singular gifts of grace bestowed on thee in life, and glory after death, I give thanks to God, and beg of thee, with all that affection of my heart that by thy powerful intercession thou mayest obtain for me above all things the grace to live a holy life and die a holy death.

Moreover, I beg of thee to obtain for me (here insert some special spiritual or temporal favor); but if what I ask does not tend to the glory of God and the greater good of my soul, do thou, I beseech thee, obtain for me what will more certainly attain these ends. Amen

Prayer for the Holy Father

Almighty and everlasting God, have mercy upon Thy servant, Pope Leo XIV, our Supreme Pontiff, and direct him, according to Thy loving kindness, in the way of eternal salvation; that, of Thy gift, he may ever desire that which is pleasing unto Thee and may accomplish it with all his might. Through Christ Our Lord. Amen.

Our Father. Hail Mary, Glory Be to the Father. . .



Words ^{OF} WISDOM

Quotations for you to meditate on concerning your life and Our Lord . . .

“Prayer is of three kinds. The first is unceasing: it is a holy constant desire which prays in the sight of God, no matter what you are doing. This desire directs all your activities, spiritual and corporal, to God’s honor, and so it is described as unceasing. . . . The second kind is vocal prayer: you engage in this when you say the office or other prayers aloud. This is meant to bring you to the third kind, namely, mental prayer. Your soul reaches this kind of prayer through the use of vocal prayer with prudence and humility, so that while the tongue speaks, the heart is not far from God.”

— **St. Catherine of Siena**

“Obedience is so excellent a virtue that our Lord wished to direct the whole course of His life by it. He tells us often that He came not to do His own will, but the will of His Father; and the Apostle says that He ‘made Himself obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.’ He was pleased to add to the infinite merit of a perfect obedience. Obedience takes precedence of charity, because obedience comes under justice, as again it is better to pay our debts than to give alms. Hence it is better to obey than to perform an act of charity of our own choice.”

— **St. Francis de Sales**

“The sight of this great majesty of God, which I came to understand more profoundly and which is worshipped by the heavenly spirits according to their degree of grace and hierarchies into which they are divided, did not cause my soul to be stricken with terror or fear; no, no, not at all! My soul was filled with peace and love, and the more I come to know the greatness of God, the more joyful I become that He is as He is. And I rejoice immensely in His greatness and am delighted that I am so little because, since I am little, He carries me in His arms and hold me close to His Heart.”

— **St. Maria Faustina Kowalska**

“When I say that I believe in God, who is holy, all-powerful, and utterly good, this remains mere words, unless I do something about it. In order to make myself fully conscious of the truth contained in this statement, I must ‘realize’ it, that is to say I must put myself in touch with God. I must seek Him. I must open myself to Him so that He may find me, and then in the encounter in which, starting from inside myself, I arrive finally at Him, in which He permits me to perceive His power and His gentleness, only then do those words that connote force and gentleness have their true meaning.”

— **Servant of God Romano Guardini**

“Our heart is a garden in which wild and noxious weeds continue to grow. We must therefore have the hoe of mortification always in hand to remove this noxious growth, otherwise the garden will soon be choked with thorns and thistles. ‘Overcome yourself,’ was a favorite saying with St. Ignatius of Loyola. It was always on his lips; again and again he returned to it when addressing his religious brethren.”

— **St. Alphonse Liguori**



Words of WISDOM

Quotations from Saints whose feasts are in December . . .

“Give me the child until he is seven and I’ll give you the man.”

— **St. Francis Xavier**

“Think of the Father as a spring of life begetting the Son like a river and the Holy Ghost like a sea, for the spring and the river and sea are all one nature. Think of the Father as a root, and of the Son as a branch, and the Spirit as a fruit, for the substance in these three is one. The Father is a sun and the Son as rays and the Holy Ghost as heat.”

— **St. John of Damascene**

“The giver of every good and perfect gift has called upon us to mimic His giving, by grace through faith, and this is not of ourselves.”

— **St. Nicholas of Myra**

“Let your door stand open to receive Him, unlock your soul to Him, offer Him a welcome in your mind, and then you will see the riches of simplicity, the treasures of peace, the joy of grace. Throw wide the gate of your heart, stand before the sun of the everlasting light . . . “

— **St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan**

“I am a nobody, I am a small rope, a tiny ladder, the tailend, a leaf.”

— **St. Juan Diego**

“He who walking on the sea could calm the bitter waves, who gives life to the dying seeds of the earth, He who was able to loose the mortal chains of earth, and after three days darkness could bring again to the upper world the brother for his sister Martha: He, I believe, will make Damasus rise again from the dust.”

— **Pope Damasus I**

“Better that only a few Catholics should be left, staunch and sincere in their religion, than that they should, remaining many, desire as it were, to be in collusion with the Church’s enemies and in conformity with the open foes of our faith.”

— **St. Peter Canisius**

“Fight all error, but do it with good humor, patience, kindness, and love. Harshness will damage your own soul and spoil the best cause.”

— **St. John of Kanty**

“Many are needed to plant and water what has been planted now that the faith has spread so far and there are so many people . . . No matter who plants or waters, God gives no harvest unless what is planted is the faith of Peter and unless he agrees to his teachings.”

— **St. Thomas Becket**

“You will not find what you want or most desire, neither on this road of yours nor that of high contemplation, but in a great humility and submission of heart.”

— **St. John of the Cross**

“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth.”

— **St. John the Evangelist**

The Month of December 2025

Theme: The Coming of Jesus



December is dedicated to Advent and the coming of Christ. We focus on getting ourselves ready for the celebration of Christ's birth more than 2,000 years ago. Advent is a time of prayerful, spiritual preparation for the Christmas season, as well as the second and final coming of the Lord.

Prayer Intention:

For Christians in Areas of Conflict

Let us pray that Christians living in areas of war or conflict, especially in the Middle East, might be seeds of peace, reconciliation, and hope.

Virtue: Self-Denial & Love of the Cross

The love which Jesus had for the Cross was so great that He embraced it from the first moment of His Incarnation. The will of His heavenly Father decreed His life on earth should be the Way of the Cross from His birth. To imitate Christ, we must love God's Will and carry our cross with patience and resignation.