



DECEMBER

Month of the Immaculate Conception

DEVOTION OF THE MONTH

The month of December is dedicated to the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Chosen before time to be the Mother of God Incarnate, Jesus Christ, God created Mary perfect and full of grace, preserving her from the stain of Original Sin. Mary Immaculate is the most beautiful fruit of the work of redemption accomplished by her Son, thereby making her the perfect model of holiness for all Christians.

FROM THE MOUTHS OF SAINTS

“By constantly thinking of ourselves, we render ourselves incapable of receiving the kindness of others. Only to the extent that we have emptied ourselves of ourselves can God fill us with Himself. And likewise, the best way to have our prayers answered is to pray for the intentions of others...Therein probably must be sought the reason more of our prayers are not answered. How can God answer the prayers we address to Him unless we answer the prayers others address to us? Do we answer the prayers of the poor? the maimed? the lame? the sinner? the missionary? If not, then by what right can we expect God to answer our requests? How can God give us His gifts, if we never give others our gifts? ...The law is as simple as that: sow, and you reap. Do not keep your seed in your barns; give it away—scatter it over the fields...And lo! in a short time you will find your seed increased five-, ten-, a hundredfold.”

—Venerable Fulton Sheen



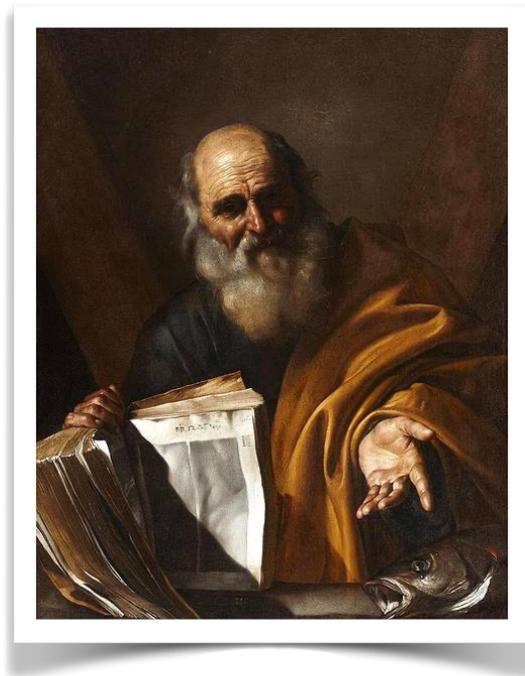
THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

The Third Sunday of Advent is called Gaudete (Rejoice) Sunday. Advent is a penitential season of abstinence, sacrifice, and prayer in order to prepare our souls for the advent or coming of the Lord. On Gaudete Sunday we celebrate that our hopeful anticipation for the coming of Christ at Christmas is almost over. Rose is the liturgical color used to signify joy, therefore we light the rose Advent candle on the third Sunday of Advent and the priests wear rose vestments. Gaudete Sunday corresponds to Laetare Sunday during the season of Lent.

SAINT ANDREW CHRISTMAS NOVENA

One of the most beloved novenas of all time is called the “St. Andrew Christmas Novena” or simply “The Christmas Novena.” This beautiful novena, which is over 100 years old, is begun on St. Andrew’s feast day (November 30) and ends on Christmas Eve. Unlike other novenas, this one is prayed not once a day, but 15 times a day. The beauty and sweetness of this short prayer will unfold for you through its daily recitation, allowing you to meditate more fully on the profound mystery of the Incarnation.

It is piously believed that whoever prays this novena will obtain the favor they request. So when you pray this novena, choose an intention that is very close on your heart.



“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.”