

2020–2021 LITURGICAL YEAR



VOLUME ONE

Advent and Christmas

Edited by Jennifer Gregory Miller and Darden Brock

 CATHOLIC CULTURE

Liturgical Year 2020-2021, Vol. 1

Advent and Christmas

by Jennifer Gregory Miller and Darden Brock
(editors)

First of six volumes covering the 2020-2021 Catholic liturgical year, including all the days of the Advent and Christmas seasons.

Trinity Communications

CatholicCulture.org

P.O. Box 582

Manassas, VA 20108

Cover design: Christopher J. Pelicano

Painting attribution: Gerard van Honthorst, Adoration of the Shepherds

© Copyright Trinity Communications 2020

Book ID: LY20202021-V1-AC-jmgmdb

The chapters of this book appeared first on the Trinity Communications website, CatholicCulture.org.

Our website includes many more Catholic materials, including daily news, commentary, liturgical year resources, Church documents, reviews, and collections of historic Catholic writings and references. You can also sign up for daily and weekly email newsletters.

Trinity Communications is a non-profit corporation. If you would like to support our work, please register and contribute on the website; or mail a check or money order along with your email address to Trinity Communications, P.O. Box 582, Manassas, VA 20108, USA.

We look forward to seeing you at www.catholicculture.org.

Table of Contents

Introduction to the Liturgical Year	6
Introduction to Advent	9
November 29th (First Sunday of Advent)	11
November 30th (Feast of St. Andrew, apostle)	17
December 1st (Tuesday of the First Week of Advent; Bl. Charles de Foucauld)	23
December 2nd (Wednesday of the First Week of Advent)	31
December 3rd (Memorial of St. Francis Xavier, priest)	34
December 4th (Friday of the First Week of Advent; Optional Memorial of St. John Damascene, priest and doctor)	38
December 5th (Saturday of the First Week of Advent)	46
December 6th (Second Sunday of Advent)	50
December 7th (Memorial of St. Ambrose, bishop and doctor)	55
December 8th (Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception)	59
December 9th (Wednesday of the Second Week of Advent; Optional Memorial of St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin (USA))	67
December 10th (Thursday of the Second Week of Advent; Optional Memorial of Our Lady of Loreto)	72
December 11th (Friday of the Second Week of Advent; Optional Memorial of St. Damasus I, pope)	80
December 12th (Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe (USA))	84
December 13th (Third Sunday of Advent)	91
December 14th (Memorial of St. John of the Cross, priest and doctor)	95
December 15th (Tuesday of the Third Week of Advent; St. Virginia Centurione Bracelli (Italy))	99
December 16th (Wednesday of the Third Week of Advent)	104
December 17th (Thursday of the Third Week of Advent; St. Jose Manyanet, priest)	107
December 18th (Friday of the Third Week of Advent)	116
December 19th (Saturday of the Third Week of Advent)	120
December 20th (Fourth Sunday of Advent)	124
December 21st (Monday of the Fourth Week of Advent; Optional Memorial of St. Peter Canisius, priest and doctor)	130
December 22nd (Tuesday of the Fourth Week of Advent)	136

December 23rd (Wednesday of the Fourth Week of Advent; Optional Memorial of St. John of Kanty, priest)	141
December 24th (Christmas Eve)	147
Introduction to Christmas	154
December 25th (Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord (Christmas))	157
December 26th (Feast of St. Stephen, first martyr)	168
December 27th (Feast of the Holy Family)	174
December 28th (Feast of the Holy Innocents, martyrs)	181
December 29th (Fifth Day in the Octave of Christmas; Optional Memorial of St. Thomas Becket, bishop and martyr)	186
December 30th (Sixth day in the Octave of Christmas)	191
December 31st (Seventh Day in the Octave of Christmas; Optional Memorial of St. Sylvester I, pope)	195
January 1st (Octave of Christmas and Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (Holy Day of Obligation USA))	200
January 2nd (Memorials of St. Basil the Great and St. Gregory Nazianzen, bishops and doctors)	206
January 3rd (The Epiphany of the Lord)	212
January 4th (Memorial of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, religious)	219
January 5th (Memorial of St. John Neumann, bishop (USA))	223
January 6th (Optional Memorial of St. Andre Bessette, religious; Epiphany (traditional)) 227	
January 7th (Optional Memorial of St. Raymond of Penafort, priest; St. Andre Bessette, religious (Can))	234
January 8th (Friday Christmas Weekday)	239
January 9th (Saturday Christmas Weekday; Venerable Pauline-Marie Jaricot)	243
January 10th (Feast of the Baptism of the Lord)	248

Introduction to the Liturgical Year

The Church inculcates Christ and His mission through the patterns and rhythms of her Liturgical Year. She is herself the universal sacrament of salvation and the visible manifestation on earth of the presence of the Kingdom of God even now. But the Church also has various ministries and means by which she carries out her special mission. The Liturgical Year is perhaps the most important means she uses to sanctify the concept of time itself.

During the course of the Liturgical Year, the saving actions of Christ are presented again to the Faithful in an effective spiritual sequence that provides occasions for deepening our experience of Christ, for giving scope to our need for fasts and feasts, penance and joy, the remission of sin and the foretaste of heavenly glory. The annual cycle invites us to live the Christian mysteries more deeply, to let the Christ-life seep into our very bones, and in so doing to transform and renew all human endeavors, all human culture.

The backbone of the Liturgical Year is the Liturgical Calendar, an annual cycle of seasons and feasts which both commemorate and invite us to more fully enter into the real history of our salvation. At the same time, the days devoted to the celebration of many of the Church's saints provide us with inspiring models of what it means to exemplify the love and virtues which Our Lord and Savior so zealously wishes us to share. In this way, we may develop in and through time a heart like unto His own.

On the CatholicCulture.org website, we have collected and organized a great many resources for helping all of us to live the Liturgical Year more consciously and more actively. In addition to the accounts of the nature, history and purposes of the great feasts, and of course the lives of the saints, we have brought together a wide variety of customs for celebrating the various seasons and feasts which have grown up in cultures throughout the world. And in connection with these customs, we have also collected appropriate prayers and devotions, family activities, and even recipes—the better to help us taste and see the glory of the Lord! (Ps 34:8)

All of these resources are organized according to the Liturgical Calendar, and many of them are deliberately oriented toward use by the family, or what recent popes have referred to as the domestic church. The family is to be the Church in miniature, the first of all Christian communities, the warm embrace in which new souls are claimed for Christ and nourished in every way for His service. The family is also the source of the

Church's manifold vocations, including the vocations of those who dedicate themselves exclusively to Christ and the Church's service as priests and religious. Thus, in every way, the Church public, the Church as a whole, the mystical body of Christ in its fulness, depends on the health and strength of the domestic church, even as she nourishes the domestic church through her presence, her sacraments, her counsel, her teaching—and, of course, her Liturgical Year.

It is not possible in an eBook to reproduce the full richness and flexibility of these resources as they are presented on our website (www.catholicculture.org). The visual displays of eBooks cannot, in most cases, equal those of web pages, and it is generally not as easy to follow the many links available to explore the full range of offerings. What we have done in the volumes of this series is to present the days of the Liturgical Year in sequence, grouped in their proper seasons, so that the user can follow the unfolding of the Liturgical Year with immediate access to the meaning of each day, complete with its spiritual and liturgical explanations, and its biographies of the saints. Following the basic presentation for each day are many links to additional information, prayers, activities and recipes which relate specifically to that day or the Season as a whole.

These materials can be used with profit by anyone. However, if we were to offer specific advice to parents on how they may make the best use of all the resources in their own families, we would emphasize the following two points:

First, remember that all of us, but especially children, grow spiritually when we have the opportunity to associate living examples, customs and activities with God's love and saving power. This sort of participation helps children to learn the Faith along with their mother's milk, so to speak—or, as we said above, to get it into their very bones. Children also need heroes, and one way or another they will find them. The saints make the best of all possible heroes.

Second, avoid trying to do too much. Select carefully and emphasize a few things that you believe will work well in your situation. Keep your attitude joyful and relaxed. With a little judicious planning, let your family's own customs grow and develop over time. Much of this will be carried on for generations to come, generations which trace their own faith to and through you.

A word, finally, on the sources of much of the material presented both in this eBook and on the much larger web site. Many of these wonderful books are, sadly, out of print, but we owe a great debt to them. You may enjoy pursuing some of these sources on your own. The years listed are the original publication dates; some have gone through multiple editions. They include:

- Berger, Florence. *Cooking for Christ* (National Catholic Rural Life Conference) 1949
- Burton, Katherine and Helmut Ripperger. *The Feast Day Cookbook*, 1951
- Butler, Alban. *Butler's Lives of the Saints* (updated since the 18th century, up to 12 volumes depending on edition)
- Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments. *Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy* 2002
- Gueranger, OSB (Abbot). *The Liturgical Year*, 1983
- Kelly, Fr. George A. *Catholic Family Handbook*, 1959
- Lodi, Enzo. *Saints of the Roman Calendar*, 1993
- McLoughlin, Helen. *My Nameday—Come for Dessert*, 1962
- Mueller, Therese. *Our Children's Year of Grace*, 1943
- Newland, Mary Reed. *Saints and Our Children*, 1958
- Newland, Mary Reed. *We and Our Children*, 1954
- Newland, Mary Reed. *The Year and Our Children*, 1956
- Parsch, Dr. Pius. *The Church's Year of Grace* (5 volumes), 1953
- Trapp, Maria Augusta. *Around the Year with the Trapp Family*, 1955
- Weiser, Francis X., SJ. *The Easter Book*, 1954.

May you find in this series of volumes on the Liturgical Year a true gateway to the riches of Christ!

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/commentary/introduction-to-liturgical-year/>

Introduction to Advent

The Church begins a new Liturgical Year on the First Sunday of Advent. During the subsequent four weeks, she prepares with mounting expectation for the coming of Christ in a spirit of waiting, conversion and hope. This is in marked contrast to our commercial society, which begins enjoying Christmas in October and frequently ends by leaving people all “Christmased out” by the time the Christmas season actually starts on December 24th. Advent holds the key to preparing properly for Our Lord’s saving action in history, which we relive throughout the Liturgical Year.

Advent includes elements of both penitence and joy. In 490, Bishop Perpetuus of Tours officially declared Advent a penitential season in the Frankish Church of Western Europe, ordering a fast on three days of every week from November 11 until Christmas. This forty days’ fast, similar to Lent, was originally called *Quadragesima Sancti Martini* (Forty Days’ Fast of Saint Martin’s). By contrast, the Advent season of the Roman liturgy, developing a century after that of the Frankish Church, was a non-penitential, festive and joyful time of preparation for Christmas. By the thirteenth century a compromise was reached, which combined the fasting and penitential character of the Gallic observance with the Mass texts and shorter four-week cycle of the Roman Advent liturgy. The liturgy of Advent remained substantially unaltered until Vatican II mandated a few minor changes to more clearly delineate the spirit of the Lenten and Advent seasons.

Again, Advent is the beginning of the Church year, and for all of us it provides an opportunity for a fresh start. There are many popular traditions which can help us to inculcate the spirit of Advent in our lives and our homes. Among these are the Advent wreath, the Advent calendar, the Jesse Tree, and the use of the O Antiphons. More information about these traditions and customs is available on our web site, especially in the [Advent Workshop](#).

In addition, the various feasts which we celebrate during the Advent season remind us of those holy men and women who most fully lived the Advent spirit of yearning for Christ. They form a rich and varied background for our own spiritual progress during this important season. In Advent, we enjoy the Communion of the Saints in a special way, asking their help in preparing for the coming of Jesus in our hearts.

There are always four Sundays in Advent, though not necessarily four full weeks. The liturgical color of the season is violet or purple, except on the Third Sunday of

Advent, called *Gaudete* or Rejoice Sunday, when optional rose vestments may be worn. The Gloria is not recited during Advent liturgies, but the Alleluia is retained.

The prophecies of Isaiah are read often during the Advent season, but all of the readings of Advent focus on the key figures of the Old and New Testaments who were prepared and chosen by God to make the Incarnation possible: the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. John the Baptist, St. Joseph, Sts. Elizabeth and Zechariah. The expectancy heightens from December 17 to December 24 when the Liturgy resounds with the seven magnificent Messianic titles of the O Antiphons.

Advent Workshop

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/commentary/intro-advent/>

Advent: November 29th

First Sunday of Advent

Old Calendar: First Sunday of Advent

For Catholics, the new Liturgical Year commences with the first Sunday of Advent. In this new liturgical year, the Church not only wishes to indicate the beginning of a period, but the beginning of a renewed commitment to the faith by all those who follow Christ, the Lord. This time of prayer and path of penance that is so powerful, rich and intense, endeavors to give us a renewed impetus to truly welcome the message of the One who was incarnated for us. In fact, the entire Liturgy of the Advent season, will spur us to an awakening in our Christian life and will put us in a ‘vigilant’ disposition, to wait for Our Lord Jesus who is coming:



‘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.’¹

The Season of Advent is therefore a season of vigilant waiting, that prepares us to welcome the mystery of the Word Incarnate, who will give the ‘Light’ to the womb of the Virgin Mary, but essentially this time prepares us not only to welcome this great event but to incarnate it in our lives. We could say that the true light enters the world through the immaculate womb of Mary but it does not stay there. On the contrary, this light flows out into our dark, obscure, sinful lives to illuminate them, so that we can become the light that illuminates the world. For this reason, let us live this time of waiting not only to celebrate a historical memory but to repeat this memory in our lives and in the service of others. To wait for the Lord who comes, means to wait and to watch so that the Word of Love enters inside us and focuses us every day of our lives.

As Blessed John Henry Newman reminded us in a homily for the Advent Season: “Advent is a time of waiting, it is a time of joy because the coming of Christ is not only a gift of grace and salvation but it is also a time of commitment because it motivates us to live the present as a time of responsibility and vigilance. This ‘vigilance’ means the necessity, the urgency of an industrious, living ‘wait’. To make all this happen, then we need to wake up, as we are warned by the apostle to the Gentiles, in today’s reading to the Romans: ‘Besides this you know what hour it is, how it is full time now for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we first believed’ (Rm 13:11).

We must start our journey to ascend to the mountain of the Lord, to be illuminated by His Words of peace and to allow Him to indicate the path to tread (cf. Is 2:1-5). Moreover, we must change our conduct abandoning the works of darkness and put on the ‘armor of light’ and so seek only to do God’s work and to abandon the deeds of the flesh (cf. Rm 13:12-14). Jesus, through the story in the parable, outlines the Christian life style that must not be distracted and indifferent but must be vigilant and recognize even the smallest sign of the Lord’s coming because we don’t know the hour in which He will arrive (cf. Mt 24:39-44)

1 Pope Benedict XVI, *Celebration of First Vespers of Advent, Vatican Basilica, December 2006*

Excerpted from the website of [Congregation for the Clergy](#)



The traditional Collect (or opening prayer) of the last Sunday of the Church year began “Stir up the wills of Thy faithful people, we beseech Thee, O Lord...” With this request to God to “stir up” our wills, this day was traditionally called [Stir-Up Sunday](#). Because the Ordinary Form celebrates the Solemnity of Christ the King on the last Sunday of the year, “Stir-Up Sunday” is often the First Sunday of Advent. The traditional Collect of the First Sunday is asking God to stir up His might: “Stir up Thy might, we beg Thee, and come.” Many families create a traditional plum pudding or fruit cake or some other recipe that all the family and guests can “stir-up.” This activity of stirring-up the

ingredients symbolizes our hearts that must be stirred in preparation for Christ's birth.

What You Need to Know About Advent

A short explanation of the Advent season and its significance in the Liturgical Year.

The History, Customs and Folklore of Advent

Resources for Celebrating Advent in the Home

Jesse Tree Instructions

Jesse Tree ~ Day 1, Creation



Jesse Tree Overview

The Jesse Tree dates back to the middle ages and came from Europe. Even some ancient cathedrals have Jesse Tree designs in their stained glass windows. The “tree” is usually a branch or sapling and is decorated with various symbols that remind us of the purpose and promises of God from Creation to the Birth of Jesus Christ.

Jesse was the father of King David and God promised David that his Kingdom would last forever. Two centuries after the death of King David, God spoke through the prophet Isaiah and said:

And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots: and the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and fortitude, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord. (Isaiah 11:1-2)



Each Jesse Tree ornament usually consists of a handmade symbol or drawing that represents one of the major stories of the Old Testament along with a brief verse of Scripture from that story.



Commentary for the Readings in the Extraordinary Form: First Sunday of Advent

“There will be signs in the
...(heavens)...and upon the earth,
distress of nations...they will see the Son
of Man coming...lift up your heads,
because your redemption is at hand”
(Gospel).



On His second Advent at the end of the world Jesus will come in the fullness of Divine Power. Then will we be obliged to accept Him as King of Justice. So today let us begin to prepare for this year’s anniversary of His first Advent as King of Mercy.

Because His coming is “nearer” we are warned to “rise from sleep,...lay aside the works of darkness...and put on the Lord Jesus Christ” (Epistle).

Aware of the dangers ahead during this preparation, we call upon His “power” to protect us (Prayer) and to “cleanse us” (Secret). Finally, we promise to “prepare with due reverence for the coming festival” (Postcommunion).

Excerpted from *My Sunday Missal*, Confraternity of the Precious Blood

Daily Readings for: November 29, 2020
(Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: Grant your faithful, we pray, almighty God, the resolve to run forth to

meet your Christ with righteous deeds at his coming, so that, gathered at his right hand, they may be worthy to possess the heavenly Kingdom. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Plum Pudding I](#)
- [Plum Pudding II](#)
- [Plum Pudding III](#)
- [Plum Pudding IV](#)
- [Plum Pudding V](#)
- [Rich Dark Fruit Cake II](#)

ACTIVITIES

- [Advent and the Year of the Eucharist](#)
- [Advent Calendar II](#)
- [Advent or Mary Candle I](#)
- [Advent or Mary Candle II](#)
- [Advent Wreath I](#)
- [Advent Wreath II](#)
- [Advent Wreath III](#)
- [Advent Wreath V](#)
- [Advent Wreath: Background and How To Make Your Own Wreath](#)
- [Advent Wreath: Making Your Own](#)
- [Gifts for Jesus, the Advent Manger](#)
- [Jesse Tree Instructions](#)
- [Jesse Tree Symbols](#)
- [Jesse Tree, Day 1 - Creation](#)

- Posters for Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany
- Religion in the Home for Elementary School: December
- Religion in the Home for Preschool: December
- Stir-Up Sunday
- Stir-Up Sunday - First Sunday in Advent

PRAYERS

- Blessing of the Advent Wreath
- Hungarian wheat
- Advent Prayers
- Jesse Tree Prayer Service
- Advent Table Blessing 1
- Book of Blessings: Blessing of an Advent Wreath (First Sunday of Advent)
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent (1st Plan)
- Novena to the Immaculate Conception

LIBRARY

- Caryll Houselander and the Flowering of Christ | Janet Golden

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-11-29>

Advent: November 30th

Feast of St. Andrew, apostle

Old Calendar: St. Andrew

St. Andrew was a native of Bethsaida in Galilee, a fisherman by trade, and a former disciple of John the Baptist. He was the one who introduced his brother Peter to Jesus, saying, “We have found the Messiah.” Overshadowed henceforth by his brother, Andrew nevertheless appears again in the Gospels as introducing souls to Christ. After Pentecost, Andrew took up the apostolate on a much wider scale, and is said to have been martyred at Patras in southern Greece on a cross which was in the form of an “X”. This type of cross has long been known as “St. Andrew’s cross.”



Beginning today the following beautiful prayer is traditionally recited fifteen times a day until Christmas. This is a very meditative prayer that helps us increase our awareness of the real focus of Christmas and helps us prepare ourselves spiritually for His coming.

+Hail and blessed be the hour and moment in which the Son of God was born of the most pure Virgin Mary, at midnight, in Bethlehem, in piercing cold. In that hour vouchsafe, O my God! to hear my prayer and grant my desires, [here mention your request] through the merits of Our Saviour Jesus Christ, and of His blessed Mother. Amen.



Jesse Tree ~ Adam and Eve

St. Andrew (or Andreas) the Apostle

Andrew, Peter’s brother, and John were the first disciples to follow the Lord. With tender



delicacy the Gospel (John 1:35-42) describes their first meeting with Jesus. Andrew did not belong to the inner circle of the apostles, Peter, James and John, and the evangelists narrate nothing extraordinary about him (John 6:8); but tradition (resting on apocryphal Acts) extols his great love of the Cross and of the Savior; and the Church distinguishes him both in the Mass (his name occurs in the Canon and in the Libera since the time of Pope St. Gregory I who had a special devotion to him) and in the Breviary.



The story of his martyrdom rests on the apocryphal Acts which lack historical foundation. The pagan judge exhorted him to sacrifice to the gods. Andrew replied: “I sacrifice daily to almighty God, the one and true God. Not the flesh of oxen and the blood of goats do I offer, but the unspotted Lamb upon the altar. All the faithful partake of His flesh, yet the Lamb remains unharmed and living.” Angered by the reply, Aegeas commanded him to be thrown into prison. With little difficulty the people would have freed him, but Andrew personally calmed the mob and earnestly entreated them to desist, as he was hastening toward an ardently desired crown of martyrdom.

When Andrew was led to the place of martyrdom, on beholding the cross from a distance he cried out: “O good Cross, so long desired and now set up for my longing soul I confident and rejoicing come to you; exultingly receive me, a disciple of Him who hung on you.” Forthwith he was nailed to the cross. For two days he hung there alive, unceasingly proclaiming the doctrine of Christ until he passed on to Him whose likeness in death he had so vehemently desired.—The legendary account of our saint’s martyrdom has this value: it presents to us the mysticism of the Cross of later times.

Excerpted from *The Church’s Year of Grace*, Pius Parsch.

Patron: Achaia; Amalfi, Italy; anglers; Burgundy; diocese of Constantinople; fish dealers; fish mongers; fishermen; gout; Greece; Lampertheim; Germany; maidens; old maids; Patras, Greece; Russia; Scotland; singers; sore throats; spinsters; University of Patras; unmarried women; women who wish to become mothers.

Symbols: Fish; Saint Andrew’s cross; Cross saltire (x-shaped); V or Y shaped cross; two fishes; tall cross and book; vertical spear; primitive fish hook; fisherman’s net.

Often portrayed as: Man bound to a cross; man preaching from a cross; preacher holding some fish.

Things to Do:

- Today's feast traditionally marks the end of the Church year and beginning of Advent. Advent always begins on the Sunday closest to November 30, with this day being the last possible day of the old Liturgical Year. Christmas is right around the corner. An old saying reflected this:

St Andrew the King Three weeks and three days before Christmas begins.

Because weddings were not allowed during Advent and Christmas and Andrew is the patron of unmarried maidens, many countries have marriage-related superstitions connected to this day. See [Patron Saints Index](#) for a few traditions.

- Beginning today the [Christmas Anticipatory Prayer](#), also known as the “Novena to St. Andrew” (Hail and Blessed be the hour...) is prayed every day until Christmas.
- Read [Anticipating Christmas, Beginning with the Saint Andrew](#).
- View some of the art depictions of [St. Andrew](#). Here's another [Gallery of Images](#) of Andrew.
- Remember to pray for [fishermen](#) and all who make their livelihood by the sea.
- Andrew is the patron saint of Scotland, Russia, and Romania. The flag of Scotland (and the Union Flag and the arms and Flag of Nova Scotia) feature a saltire (X-shaped cross) in commemoration of the shape of St. Andrew's cross.
- Read more about St. Andrew from [Butler's Lives of the Saints](#). Also read about Andrew from [The Golden Legend](#).
- **Foods connected with this feast:** St. Andrew was a fisherman, so fish dishes and biblical themes would reign supreme. [Women for Faith and Family](#) have reprinted Evelyn Vitz's suggested “Biblical Dinner” menu. But there are other foods connected with this day:
 - **Scotland:** St. Andrew is the patron of Scotland. Scones, haggis, sheephead and fish dishes are traditional. The scones are called “wigs”,

although their shape is rectangular.

- **England:** St Andrew is a patron of lace-makers. On his feast, sometimes known as “Tander”, areas such as Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire and Northamptonshire celebrate by feasting, drinking elderberry wine, sports and serving a special cake called the [Tandra Cake](#), particularly in Bedfordshire. It has a bread dough base to which lard, sugar, currants, lemon peel and eggs are added. This is also a day for squirrel hunting in England, so [Brunswick Stew](#) would be another dish on the table in England.
- **Slovakian Countries:** [Halushky](#) (pasta dish) is cooked. Unmarried girls place slips of paper with names of single young men into the dish.

Daily Readings for: [November 30, 2020](#) (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: We humbly implore your majesty, O Lord, that, just as the blessed Apostle Andrew was for your Church a preacher and pastor, so he may be for us a constant intercessor before you. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Apostle Cookies](#)
- [Brunswick Stew](#)
- [Colcannon II](#)
- [Colcannon III](#)
- [Fillet of Flounder in Tomato Sauce](#)
- [Fish Cake](#)
- [Gâteau Aux Noix Le Saint-André \(St. Andrew's Walnut Cake\)](#)

- Haggis
- Haggis
- Halushky or Knedliki
- Salmon Primavera with Lemon Butter Sauce
- Scottish Drop Scones
- Sheep's Head
- Ship Cake
- Sole with Red Wine and Onions
- Tandra Cakes
- Tuna Fondue

ACTIVITIES

- Namedays
- Preparing for Heaven
- Apostle Cookies
- Feast of St. Andrew, November 11
- Nameday Ideas for the Feast of St. Andrew, the Apostle
- St. Andrew

PRAYERS

- Advent Prayers
- Advent Table Blessing 1
- November Devotion: The Holy Souls in Purgatory
- Little Litany of the Holy Souls
- Prayer for a Happy Death
- Christmas Anticipation Prayer
- O Bona Crux!

- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent \(1st Plan\)](#)
- [Daily Acceptance of Death](#)
- [Prayer for Fisherman and All Those Who Travel by Sea](#)
- [Table Blessing for the Feast of St. Andrew, the Apostle](#)
- [Novena to the Immaculate Conception](#)
- [Novena to St. Francis Xavier - The Novena of Grace](#)

LIBRARY

- [Andrew, the Protoclete | Pope Benedict XVI](#)
- [Friends of Jesus | Pope Benedict XVI](#)

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-11-30>

Advent: December 1st

Tuesday of the First Week of Advent; Bl. Charles de Foucauld

Old Calendar: St. Edmond Campion (Hist); St. Eligius (Hist)

Today is the feast of Blessed Charles Eugène de Foucauld, a French Catholic religious and priest, who lived among the Tuareg in the Sahara in Algeria. He was assassinated in 1916 outside the door of the fort he built for the protection of the Tuareg, and is a martyr. His inspiration and writings led to the founding of the Little Brothers of Jesus among other religious congregations. He was beatified on November 13, 2005 by Pope Benedict XVI.



Historically today is the feast of St. Edmund Campion, Jesuit martyr, one of the Forty Martyrs of England and Wales, also called “the Pope’s Champion.” It is also the feast of St. Eligius, priest and bishop of Noyon and Tournai



Jesse Tree ~ Fall of Man

St. Edmond Campion

The most famous of the English martyrs, Edmund Campion (1540-1581) gave up a promising career at Oxford and an invitation to enter Queen Elizabeth’s service in order to become a Catholic priest and minister to the abandoned Catholics who greatly desired the sacraments.

Campion was born in London of Catholic parents who later became Protestant. He attended St. John’s College, Oxford, where he gained renown as a lecturer and a following of students who called themselves “Campionites.” When he was 26 years old,

he gave a speech of welcome in Latin to Queen Elizabeth on her visit to Oxford; he made such an impression on the queen that she and Lords Cecil and Leicester tried to recruit him for her service. He probably took the Oath of Supremacy, and was ordained a deacon for the Established Church. The more he studied to be a priest, the more convinced he became that the Catholic Church had the true faith. He moved to Dublin in 1569 in an effort to find a place to live as a Catholic, but the Irish capital showed an anti-Catholic feeling that drove him back to London. In June 1571 he left England for Douai, Belgium where the recently founded English College trained seminarians for England.

Campion finished his degree in 1573 and set out soon after for Rome with the intention of becoming a Jesuit. Within a month of his arrival in Rome, he was accepted into the Society. At that time there was neither an English province nor an English mission, so he was assigned to the Austrian province and went to Prague and Brno to make his novitiate. He remained in Prague after he took vows and was ordained there, expecting to spend the rest of his life teaching in that city. He wrote and directed plays for his students and won renown as an orator.

The English Jesuit's life changed course suddenly when the Superior General in Rome decided to open a mission in England. Father Campion was one of the first to be assigned to it. He stopped in Rome on his way back to England and joined Father Rober Persons and Brother Ralph Emerson. They turned north and joined other recruits for the new mission at Saint Omer in Flanders. English spies in Flanders learned of their impending departure and informed the English ports of entry, who awaited their arrival. Campion and Emerson left the Continent on the evening of June 24. Campion disguised himself as a "Mr. Edmonds," a jewelry merchant. Port authorities were suspicious, but Campion answered their questions adequately and they let the merchant enter.



It had been eight years since Campion had left England. He briefly remained in London where he wrote a manifesto of the mission which has become known as "Campion's Brag." Its point was that the mission was religious, not political; so well-written and powerful was it, that copies were made and widely distributed to confirm Catholics in their faith. Campion himself moved on to Berkshire, Oxfordshire, Lancashire and Yorkshire. He would stay at a Catholic house for one or two nights or

visit households where Catholics were employed. His pattern was to arrive during the day, preach and hear confessions during the evening, and then celebrate Mass in the morning before moving on to the next location. He continued to write and composed a book addressed to the academic world; entitled *Rationes decem* (“Ten Reasons”), the book gave arguments to prove the truth of Catholicism and the falsity of Protestantism. It was printed by the end of June 1581. Many of the 400 copies printed were left on the benches of Oxford’s University Church of St. Mary. Campion was still well-enough known that the book was eagerly read.

Campion’s freedom to minister to Catholics soon ended. In July he left London and stopped at the Yate family in Berkshire. The family’s Catholic neighbors learned that the Jesuit priest had been there and pressed the Yates to invite him back. Mrs. Yate sent word to Campion who returned, unfortunately at a time when a professional priest-hunter was in the congregation pretending to be Catholic. After Mass the hunter slipped away to notify the authorities who quickly returned to the house but could not find any priests. The guards remained on the grounds, listening for sounds of unusual activity. They alertly heard a group of people leaving a meeting that Campion had addressed. The guards searched the house again, this time finding Campion and two other priests.

The three were taken to the Tower of London on July 22, where Campion was put in a cell so small he could neither stand upright nor lie down. After three days there he was brought to Leicester house, where he met Queen Elizabeth for a second time. She offered him the opportunity to renounce his Catholic faith and become a Protestant minister, with the offer of great advancement. He refused and was returned to his cell; five days later he was tortured on the rack. He had four conferences with Anglican divines, something he himself had



requested in the book *rationes decem*, but the disputations were inconclusive, partly because the first one was held shortly after he had been tortured. The government determined that he should be executed, but they needed a stronger charge than the fact that he was a Catholic priest. On Nov. 14, the priests were led to Westminster Hall where charges were raised against them that they had formed a conspiracy against the life of the queen, had exhorted foreigners to invade the country and had entered England with the intent of fomenting rebellion to support the invaders. At his trial six days later, Campion was asked to raise his right hand and take an oath; he was unable to do so

because of recent torture, so another one of the priests had to lift his arm for him. Campion attempted to defend all the priests by pointing out their motives were religious, not political; but they were found guilty of high treason and condemned to be hanged, drawn and quartered. The priests joined in singing the Te Deum when they heard the verdict.

Campion remained in chains for another 11 days, and then was dragged through the muddy streets of London to Tyburn. With him were Briant, and Father Ralph Sherwin, a diocesan priest. As Campion forgave those who had condemned him, the cart he was standing on was driven from under him and he was left hanging. The executioner then cut him down and tore out his heart and intestines before cutting his body into pieces. Briant had been tried a day after Campion, but was executed soon after the other Jesuit. He was cut down while still alive after being hung so that he could be disemboweled and his body cut into quarters. He was only 25 years old.

Excerpted from Jesuit Saints and Blesseds © 2011 Society of Jesus

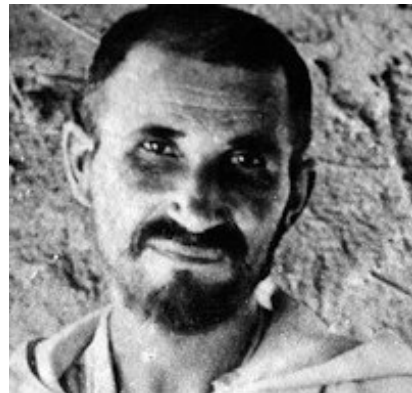
Bl. Charles de Foucauld (Brother Charles of Jesus)

Blessed Charles de Foucauld was born in Strasbourg, France on September 15th, 1858. Orphaned at the age of six, he and his sister Marie were raised by their grandfather in whose footsteps he followed by taking up a military career.

He lost his faith as an adolescent. His taste for easy living was well known to all and yet he showed that he could be strong willed and constant in difficult situations. He undertook a risky exploration of Morocco (1883-1884). Seeing the way Muslims expressed their faith questioned him and he began repeating, "My God, if you exist, let me come to know you."

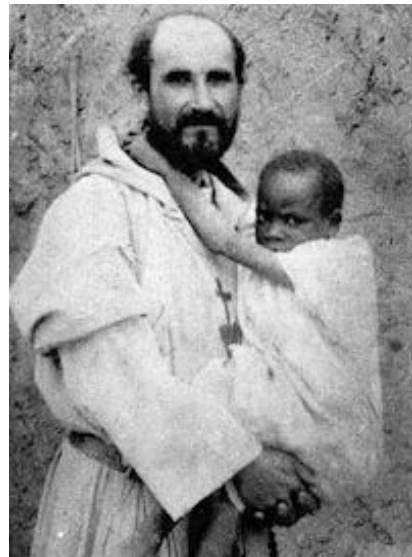
On his return to France, the warm, respectful welcome he received from his deeply Christian family made him continue his search. Under the guidance of Fr. Huvelin he rediscovered God in October 1886. He was then 28 years old. "As soon as I believed in God, I understood that I could not do otherwise than to live for him alone."

A pilgrimage to the Holy Land revealed his vocation to him: to follow Jesus in his life at Nazareth. He spent 7 years as a Trappist, first in France and then at Akbès in Syria. Later he began to lead a life of prayer and adoration, alone, near a convent of Poor Clares



in Nazareth.

Ordained a priest at 43 (1901) he left for the Sahara, living at first in Beni Abbès and later at Tamanrasset among the Tuaregs of the Hoggar. He wanted to be among those who were, “the furthest removed, the most abandoned.” He wanted all who drew close to him to find in him a brother, “a universal brother.” In a great respect for the culture and faith of those among whom he lived, his desire was to “shout the Gospel with his life”. “I would like to be sufficiently good that people would say, “If such is the servant, what must the Master be like?”



On the evening of December 1st 1916, he was killed by a band of marauders who had encircled his house.

He had always dreamed of sharing his vocation with others: after having written several rules for religious life, he came to the conclusion that this “life of Nazareth” could be led by all. Today the “spiritual family of Charles de Foucauld” encompasses several associations of the faithful, religious communities and secular institutes for both lay people and priests.

Excerpted from the [Libreria Editrice Vaticana](#)

Things to Do:

- Read more about Bl. Charles at the [Joseph House](#) and at the [Little Sisters of Jesus](#).
- Here are some [quotes by Charles de Foucauld](#) at Jesus Caritas and a [picture biography](#).
- Another excellent [biography of Charles de Foucauld](#) which can be downloaded as a pdf file.
- Another [short biography](#) from the Dictionary of African Christian Biography.

St. Eligius

Eligius, a goldsmith at Paris, was commissioned by King Clotaire to make a throne. With the gold and precious stones given him he made two. Struck by his rare honesty, the king gave him an appointment at court, and demanded an oath of fidelity sworn upon holy relics; but Eligius prayed with tears to be excused, for fear of failing in reverence to the relics of the Saints.

On entering the court he fortified himself against its seductions by many austerities and continual ejaculatory prayers. He had a marvellous zeal for the redemption of captives, and for their deliverance would sell his jewels, his food, his clothes, and his very shoes, once by his prayers breaking their chains and opening their prisons. His great delight was in making rich shrines for relics.

His striking virtue caused him, a layman and a goldsmith, to be made Bishop of Noyon, and his sanctity in this holy office was remarkable.

He possessed the gifts of miracles and prophecy, and died in 665.



Excerpted from *Lives of the Saints*, by Alban Butler, Benziger Bros. ed. [1894]

Patron: Horses, jockeys, veterinarians, craftspeople (of all trades), electricians, computer scientists, mechanics, miners, security guards, gas station workers, taxi cab drivers, farmers, servants, and coin collectors

Things to Do:

- For more information on St. Eligius please see [*Who Was Saint Eligius, The Life of St. Loye*](#) and [*St. Eligius, or Eloy, Bishop of Noyon, Confessor*](#)

Daily Readings for: December 01, 2020

(Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: Look with favor, Lord God, on our petitions, and in our trials grant us your compassionate help, that, consoled by the presence of your Son, whose coming we now await, we may be tainted no longer by the corruption of former ways. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [English Eggs and Bacon](#)

ACTIVITIES

- [Jesse Tree](#)
- [Jesse Tree Instructions](#)
- [Jesse Tree Ornament Ideas and Blessing](#)
- [Jesse Tree Symbols](#)
- [Religion in the Home for Elementary School: December](#)
- [Religion in the Home for Preschool: December](#)

PRAYERS

- [December Devotion: The Immaculate Conception](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent \(1st Plan\)](#)
- [Novena to the Immaculate Conception](#)
- [Novena to St. Francis Xavier - The Novena of Grace](#)
- [Prayer of Abandonment](#)
- [A Daily Prayer of St. Edmund](#)

LIBRARY

- Bl. Charles de Foucauld: Heart of Christianity, Heart of Christ | Cardinal Jose Saraiva Martins
- Charles de Foucauld, Model Of Adoration And Dialogue | Pope Saint John Paul II
- Christendom's Great Defeat | Christopher Check
- The Jesuits | Alban Goodier
- The Priest Martyrs of England | Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-01>

Advent: December 2nd

Wednesday of the First Week of Advent

Old Calendar: St. Bibiana, virgin and martyr

According to the 1962 Missal of St. John XXIII the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite, today is the feast of St. Bibiana who was martyred at Rome under Julian the Apostate in 363.



Jesse Tree ~ Noah



St. Bibiana

St. Bibiana was a Roman who was martyred during the time of Julian the Apostate. A legend states that Bibiana's parents, Flavian and Dafrosa, were devout Christians as well. Dafrosa was beheaded, and Flavian, who was a former Roman prefect, had his face burned with a hot iron and was exiled. Bibiana and Demetria, her sister, were forced to remain in their house after all their possessions had been taken from them. For five months the two sisters fasted and prayed. When they appeared in court, Demetria died on the spot, and the judge handed Bibiana over to a woman named Fufina. This woman tried to tempt Bibiana to be unfaithful to Christ, but her efforts were in vain.

Bibiana was scourged to death with whips that were loaded with lead. Her corpse was left out in the open for dogs to eat, but no dogs touched it, and after two days a priest



named John took the body at night and buried it. St. Bibiana is one of the three virgin martyrs particularly venerated in Rome, the other two being St. Cecilia and St. Agnes.

Patron: Diocese of Los Angeles, California; epilepsy; epileptics; hangovers; headaches; insanity; mental illness; mentally ill people; single laywomen; torture victims.

Symbols: pillar; branch of a tree; dagger; scourge; column and scourge with leaded thongs.

Things to Do:

- Saint Bibiana lost everything except her faith. Say a prayer for those you know who are grieving the loss of loved ones, homes, jobs, health or some other tragedy.
- In imitation of St. Bibiana, resolve, with the help of God's grace, that no human considerations or advantages, no human ties and affections, will ever move you to surrender your Catholic faith, to deflect from God's commandments, to defile yourself with mortal sin or to lose the priceless pearl of chastity.
- Say this prayer in honor of St. Bibiana: O God, the giver of all good gifts, who didst bestow on thy servant Bibiana both the flower of virginity and the palm of martyrdom; we pray thee, that, by her intercession, our hearts may in such wise be joined in charity unto thee; that we, being defended against all dangers, may attain unto the rewards of everlasting salvation. Through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Daily Readings for: December 02, 2020
(Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: Prepare our hearts, we pray, O Lord Our God, by your divine power, so that at the coming of Christ your Son we may be found worthy of the banquet of eternal life and merit to receive heavenly nourishment from his hands. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- Pepparkakor (Ginger Cookies)

ACTIVITIES

- Religion in the Home for Elementary School: December
- Religion in the Home for Preschool: December

PRAYERS

- December Devotion: The Immaculate Conception
- Collect for Feast of St. Bibiana
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent (1st Plan)
- Novena to the Immaculate Conception
- Novena to St. Francis Xavier - The Novena of Grace

LIBRARY

- None

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-02>

Advent: December 3rd

Memorial of St. Francis Xavier, priest

Old Calendar: St. Francis Xavier

St. Francis Xavier (1506-1552) was born in the castle of Xavier in Navarre, Spain. In 1525 he went to Paris where he met St. Ignatius Loyola and with whom he received Holy Orders in Venice in 1537. In 1540 he was sent to evangelize India. He labored in western India, the island of Ceylon, Malacca, Molucca Islands, island of Mindanao (Philippines), and Japan. In 1552 he started on a voyage to China but died on Sancian Island.



Jesse Tree ~ Abraham

St. Francis Xavier

This saint, one of the Church's most illustrious missionaries, came from a noble Basque family in Spain. He studied at the University of Paris, where he taught philosophy after obtaining his degree of master of arts. Here he met Ignatius of Loyola and was enrolled as one of the first seven Jesuits. They decided to go to the Holy Land, but the war between the Turks and Venice prevented this, so for a time Francis labored at Padua, Bologna, and Rome.

In 1540 Ignatius chose him as the first missionary to the Portuguese East Indies. Francis sailed from Lisbon armed with four papal briefs making him nuncio with full powers and recommending him to the Eastern princes. He landed at Goa in India and began a vast apostolate lasting over ten years. Here he instructed the adults, gathered the children by ringing a bell in the streets, catechized them, and also visited the hospitals and prisons. He then turned to the native Indians, teaching the simple folk by versifying Catholic doctrine and fitting the verses to popular tunes. He then went on to Cape Comorin and began the conversion of the Paravas, some days baptizing so many that at night he could not raise his arm from fatigue. Then to Travencore where he founded forty-five churches in various villages. Then to Malacca in Malaya, and for eighteen months from island to

island, preaching, instructing, baptizing.

On his return to Goa he heard of the vast harvest of souls awaiting the laborers in Japan and he set out for this field with several companions, arriving at Kagoshima in 1549. He set himself to learn the language and started to preach and teach with such success that twelve years later his converts were found still retaining their first fervor. In 1551 he returned to Malacca to revisit his converts in India. Now a new goal loomed up before his eyes—pagan China, but he was not to reach it.



Arriving on the island of Sancian at the mouth of the Canton river, he became ill of a fever and would have died abandoned on the burning sands of the shore if a poor man named Alvarez had not taken him to his hut. Here he lingered for two weeks, praying between spells of delirium, and finally died, his eyes fixed with great tenderness on his crucifix. He was buried in a shallow grave and his body covered with quicklime, but when exhumed three months later it was found fresh and incorrupt. It was taken to Goa where it is still enshrined. St. Francis Xavier was proclaimed patron of foreign missions and of all missionary works by Pope St. Pius X.

Excerpted from *A Saint A Day* by Berchmans Bittle, O.F.M.Cap

Patron: African missions; diocese of Alexandria, Louisiana; Apostleship of Prayer; Australia; black missions; Borneo; China; East Indies; foreign missions; Goa, India; diocese of Green Bay, Wisconsin; India; archdiocese of Indianapolis, Indiana; Japan; diocese of Joliet, Illinois; missionaries; Missioners of the Precious Blood; Navarre, Spain; navigators; New Zealand; parish missions; plague epidemics; Propagation of the Faith.

Symbols: bell; crucifix; vessel; Pilgrim's staff; rosary; lily; font; ship and crucifix; globe.

Often portrayed as: young bearded Jesuit with a torch, flame, cross and lily; young bearded Jesuit in the company of Saint Ignatius Loyola; preacher carrying a flaming heart.

Things to Do:

- What does it mean to be an apostle? Consider how you might imitate St. Francis Xavier in apostolic works in your own situation. Read this [letter](#) from St. Francis to St. Ignatius to get an idea of his zeal.
- Read some more about St. Francis and ideas for [Celebrating the Feast of St. Francis Xavier](#).
- St. Francis was sent to India and Japan. Pray for the Church in these countries, and learn more about the modern Church in India [here](#) and [here](#), read about the history of the [Church in Japan](#).
- Find out about and support the [Holy Childhood Association](#) (St. Francis always started with the children first).
- Teach your children to pray St. Francis' favorite prayer, "Give me souls" when they have some suffering to offer up.
- Spend some time meditating on St. Ignatius' response to St. Francis before his conversion, "What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world but suffers the loss of his soul?"
- Say the [Litany of St. Francis Xavier](#).
- Make a big pot of [soup](#) for the Feast of St. Francis Xavier.
- Study some beautiful art depicting St. Francis Xavier at [Olga's Gallery](#).

Daily Readings for: December 03, 2020 (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: O God, who through the preaching of Saint Francis Xavier won many peoples to yourself, grant that the hearts of the faithful may burn with the same zeal for the faith and that Holy Church may everywhere rejoice in an abundance of offspring. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- Confessors' Light Chocolate Cake
- Nameday Chocolate Ice Cream
- Ship Cake
- Xaver Suppe

ACTIVITIES

- Celebrating for the Feast of St. Francis Xavier
- Nameday Ideas for the Feast of St. Frances Xavier
- St. Francis Xavier: Letter on the Missions, to St. Ignatius de Loyola, 1549

PRAYERS

- Advent Wreath Prayers I
- Advent Wreath Prayers II
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent (2nd Plan)
- Litany of St. Francis Xavier
- Christmas Anticipation Prayer
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent (1st Plan)
- Novena to the Immaculate Conception
- Novena to St. Francis Xavier - The Novena of Grace

LIBRARY

- Arrival of Relic of St. Francis Xavier | Cardinal George Pell

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-03>

Advent: December 4th

Friday of the First Week of Advent; Optional Memorial of St. John Damascene, priest and doctor

Old Calendar: St. Peter Chrysologus, bishop, confessor and doctor; St. Barbara, virgin and martyr

St. John Damascene was a learned theologian who carefully gathered together and transmitted to us the teaching of the Greek Fathers, and is thus one of the most trustworthy witnesses to oriental tradition. He also wrote many liturgical hymns still in use today. St. John Damascene died in 749. Leo XIII proclaimed him a Doctor of the universal Church. His feast in the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite is celebrated March 27.



According to the 1962 Missal of St. John XXIII the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite, today is the feast of St. Peter Chrysologus, bishop, confessor and doctor whose feast in the Ordinary Form of the Roman Rite is celebrated on [July 30](#). It is also the feast of St. Barbara, a virgin and martyr who died at Nicomedia about 235.

Historically today is the feast of St. Osmund of Salisbury, a Norman noble and clergyman. Following the Norman conquest of England, he served as Lord Chancellor and as the second bishop of Salisbury, or Old Sarum.



Jesse Tree ~ Isaac

St. John Damascene

John of Damascus or Damascene, the last of the Greek Fathers, was one of the principal defenders of the veneration of images against the Iconoclasts, who condemned this practice.

When John was born, Damascus was under the jurisdiction of caliphs, but Christians were allowed to hold high offices. John's father was chief revenue officer of the caliph and a sterling Christian. He entrusted his son's education to a monk, Cosmas, who had been brought from Sicily as a slave, and who schooled the young man in theology, the sciences, and poetry.



John succeeded his father in office, and while living at the court gave an example of a model Christian. But he had set his sights higher, and after resigning his office he became a monk at St. Sabbas monastery near Jerusalem. Here he spent his time writing books and composing hymns. When Leo the Isaurian issued decrees against the veneration of images, John took up the challenge and wrote treatises defending this ancient practice.

At this time the Patriarch of Jerusalem, desirous of having John among his clergy, ordained him priest and brought him to Jerusalem. After some time, however, John returned to the monastery and devoted the rest of his life to writing. His most important work is his *Fountain of Wisdom*, in which he compiled and collated the teachings of all the great theologians before him; this is the first attempt at a *Summa Theologica*, a summary of philosophy and theology, that has come down to us. John's writings are a rich treasure of ancient traditions, and are held in high esteem. Pope Leo XIII declared him a Doctor of the Church in 1890.

St. John was such a great orator that he was known as *Chrysorrhoeas* ("golden-stream"). He was the last of the Greek Fathers of the Church, and the first of the Christian Aristotleans. He also adapted choral music for use in the liturgy. His eloquent defense of Christian images has given him the title of "Doctor of Christian Art."

— *A Saint A Day* © 1957

Things to Do:

- St. John Damascene has contributed much to the Church through his writings.

Read all or part of his most famous work, [Exposition of the Orthodox Faith](#).

- Check out some ideas [for Celebrating the Feast of St. John Damascene](#).
- Learn more about his [life and writings](#).
- He was famous for his opposition to the heresy of the Iconoclasts: you could [find out more](#) about this heresy.
- Learn more about [Catholic Sacramentals](#) which include statues and images.
- Purchase [A Handbook of Catholic Sacramentals](#) by Ann Ball.
- St. John Damascene was made a Doctor of the Church for his efforts to defend the faith, [learn to defend](#) the use of religious pictures and objects to your Protestant friends.
- Read more about St. John Damascene [here](#) and [here](#)

St. Barbara

Barbara (from Nicomedia) was the daughter of a pagan noble who worshipped false gods. Because of her striking beauty, her father enclosed her in a tower to hide her from the snares of men. Barbara vowed virginity, and during an absence of her father had a third window added to her quarters in honor of the Blessed Trinity; at the same time, she also adorned her bath with the sign of the holy Cross. Upon his return her father was so angered over these changes that a miracle was needed to save her life. She was presented before the magistrate, subjected to much torturing, and finally her own father wielded the sword that severed her head. Immediately God's vengeance struck him dead. The holy virgin is highly honored both in the East and the West as patroness of artillery men and of miners. She is especially invoked for preservation from sudden death. She is one of the "Fourteen Holy Helpers."



In the past, the following prayer to St. Barbara was often recited:

Saint Barbara, thou noble bride, To thee my body I confide As well in life as at life's end. Come, aid me when I breathe my last, That I may, ere here all is past, Receive the Blessed Sacrament!

In certain parts of Europe, the so-called “Barbara branch” is brought into homes today. It consists of a small cherry twig that is set in water and should blossom on Christmas eve. The custom is deeply Biblical and liturgical. “The bud from the root of Jesse and the flower from its root” is Jesus Christ, whom we expectantly await during Advent and who will blossom forth as a flower at Christmas.

Patron: against death by artillery; against explosions; against fire; against impenitence; against lightning; against mine collapse; against storms; ammunition magazines; ammunition workers; architects; armourers; artillery; artillerymen; boatmen; bomb technicians; brass workers; brewers; builders; carpenters; construction workers; dying people; explosives workers; fire; fire prevention; firefighters; fireworks; fireworks manufacturers; fortifications; founders; geologists; gravediggers; gunners; hatmakers; hatters; lightning; mariners; martyrs; masons; mathematicians; military engineers; milliners; miners; ordnance workers; prisoners; safety from storms; sailors; saltpetre workers; smelters; stone masons; stonecutters; storms; sudden death; Syria; tilers; warehouses; watermen.

Symbols: cannon; chalice; host and paten; tower with three windows; tower and palm; monstrance; peacock feather; torches; fortress; spears; crown; book; sword; palm of martyrdom.

Often portrayed as: princess in a tower with either the palm of martyrdom or chalice of happy death; woman holding a tower or feather; woman trampling a Saracen.

Things to Do:

- Be sure to look at [Celebrating for the Feast of St. Barbara](#) in the Activities section. See also [Painting Angels, Saints and Their Symbols](#) for a description of St. Barbara’s symbols.
- Have a [St. Barbara’s Party, Syrian Style](#).
- Further reading:
 - [Story of St. Barbara for Children](#)
 - Read more about St. Barbara [here](#)
 - [Encyclopedia of Catholic Saints](#)

- [Short Biography and History](#) by Father Weiser. Read this [Life of St. Barbara](#).
 - Read about the German custom of St. Barbara's Twig, where every member of the family puts a small cherry or peach branch into water so that it will blossom on Christmas. If you have a young lady in your home desiring marriage, the custom of St. Barbara's Cherry Twigs will have St. Barbara pick the right husband for young unmarried girls. An alternative idea to this custom would be forcing Amaryllis or other bulbs to bloom for Christmas. Start the bulbs today!
 - St. Barbara is the patron of artillerymen. Offer your rosary or say a prayer for all our enlisted men and women who are in harm's way. This page provides the [Legend](#) of St. Barbara and the explanation why she is the patron of artillerymen. Read the [Ballad of St. Barbara by G. K. Chesterton](#).
 - Read about [Barbórka](#), Miners Day, which is celebrated in Poland and other European countries.
-

St. Osmund

St. Osmund was the Bishop of Salisbury who helped compile the Domesday Book. A member of the Norman nobility, he was the son of Count Henry of Seez and Isabella, half-sister of King William the Conqueror of England.

He took part in the Norman Conquest and served William as his chancellor. In 1078, he was appointed bishop of Salisbury, completing the cathedral there and founding a cathedral chapter of canons regular and school for clerics.

St. Osmund also assisted the king in assembling the massive census which became the Domesday Book. In the dispute over investiture between King William II and St. Anselm of Canterbury, Osmund initially sided with the king, but later he admitted he had made a mistake, and he begged Anselm's forgiveness.

Osmund also collected manuscripts for the cathedral library, was a copier and binder of books, authored a life of St. Aldhelm, and was thought to be responsible for drawing



up the books governing the liturgical matters for the diocese such as the Mass and Divine Office, the so-called Sarum Use.

He was canonized in 1457 by Pope Callistus III, and was the last English person to be declared a saint until the canonization of Sts. Thomas More and John Fisher in 1935.

Excerpted from [Catholic Online](#)

Patron: Against insanity, mental illness, paralysis, rupture and toothache

Things to Do:

- Learn more about St. Oswald [here](#) and [here](#)
- For more information about the *Doomsday Book* see this [article](#)

Daily Readings for: December 04, 2020 (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: Stir up your power, we pray, O Lord, and come, that with you to protect us, we may find rescue from the pressing dangers of our sins, and with you to set us free, we may be found worthy of salvation. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Grant, we pray, O Lord, that we may be helped by the prayers of the Priest Saint John Damascene, so that the true faith, which he excelled in teaching, may always be our light and our strength. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Ghorabie \(Short Cake\)](#)
- [Mrubbah-el-Mishmush \(Apricot Candy\)](#)
- [Confectioners' Icing](#)
- [Strawberry Frosted Layer Cake](#)

- Barbarakuchen
- Kamhié
- Schweinelendchen Barbara (Pork Tenderloin St. Barbara)
- St. Barbara's Bread
- Stuffed Shredded Wheat

ACTIVITIES

- Celebrating for the Feast of St. Barbara
- Celebrating for the Feast of St. John Damascene
- Fourteen Holy Helpers
- Nameday Ideas for the Feast of St. Barbara, Virgin and Martyr
- Pre-Christmas Syrian Party in Honor of St. Barbara
- St. Barbara
- St. Barbara Branch or *Barbarazweig*
- St. Barbara, December 4
- St. Barbara, Saint of Advent
- St. Barbara's Cherry Twigs
- St. Barbara's Twig or Barbarazweig
- Story of St. Barbara for Children by Joan Windham

PRAYERS

- Advent Wreath Prayers I
- Advent Wreath Prayers II
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent (2nd Plan)
- December Devotion: The Immaculate Conception
- Prayer for Troops
- Litany of the Fourteen Holy Helpers

- [Novena in Honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe](#)
- [Prayer for a Happy Death](#)
- [Christmas Anticipation Prayer](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent \(1st Plan\)](#)
- [Novena to the Immaculate Conception](#)

LIBRARY

- [The Age of Patrology | Sal Ciresi](#)
- [The Doctors of the Church | Fr. Stephen McKenna](#)

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-04>

Advent: December 5th

Saturday of the First Week of Advent

Old Calendar: St. Sabbas, abbot

In the 1962 Missal of the Extraordinary Rite, this is the feast of St. Sabbas. He is pictured as an abbot with an apple. He was once tempted to eat an apple outside of the prescribed mealtime, whereupon he vowed never to eat apples again. The Martyrology says: “At Mutala in Cappadocia the holy abbot Sabbas; in Palestine he gave the shining example of a holy life. Untiringly he labored in defense of the true faith against those opposing the Council of Chalcedon.” In Jerusalem he built a famous laura (as oriental monasteries are called), which bears his name. When the Arabs later conquered the Holy City, the monks fled to Rome, where they built a monastery and introduced the veneration of their saint. In the Eastern Church St. Sabbas ranks high in popular devotion; he is distinguished by the titles “God-bearer, the Saint, Citizen of the Holy City, Star of the Desert, Patriarch of Monks.”



Jesse Tree ~ Jacob

St. Sabbas

Saint Sabbas the Sanctified was born in the fifth century in Cappadocia, in the pious Christian family of John and Sophia. His father was a military commander. Journeying to Alexandria on military matters, his wife went with him, but they left their five-year-old son in the care of an uncle. When the boy reached eight years of age, he entered the monastery



of St. Flavian, located nearby. The gifted child quickly learned to read and became an expert on the Holy Scriptures. In vain did his parents urge St. Sabbas to return to the world and enter into marriage. At seventeen years of age he received monastic tonsure, and attained such perfection in fasting and prayer that he was given the gift of wonderworking. After spending ten years at the monastery of St. Flavian, he went to other monasteries. St. Sabbas lived in obedience at this monastery until the age of thirty.



He was later blessed to seclude himself in a cave. On Saturdays, however, he left his hermitage and came to the monastery, where he participated in divine services and ate with the brethren. After a certain time St. Sabbas received permission not to leave his hermitage at all, and he struggled in the cave for five years. After several years, disciples began to gather around St. Sabbas, seeking the monastic life. As the number of monks increased, a lavra sprang up. When a pillar of fire appeared before St. Sabbas as he was walking, he found a spacious cave in the form of a church.

St. Sabbas founded several more monasteries. Many miracles took place through the prayers of St. Sabbas: at the Lavra a spring of water welled up, during a time of drought there was abundant rain, and there were also healings of the sick and the demoniacs. The saint surrendered his soul to God in the year 532.

Symbols: Abbot with an apple.

Things to Do:

- Learn about the icon of the Mother of God called the “[Milk-Giver](#)” and its connection to St. Sabbas.
- Take some time-off from TV viewing and make time for family reading of the Scripture passages concerning the Messiah (portions of Isaiah, the birth and infancy narratives).
- Make preparations for the feast of St. Nicholas. Tonight many families put out their shoes or stockings for St. Nicholas to fill. Also many families celebrate with a party on St. Nicholas Eve.
- Don’t forget to pray “[Hail and Blessed be the hour...](#)”, the Christmas Anticipatory Prayer every day until Christmas.
- Read this [longer biography of St. Sabas](#) to find out why he is pictured with an

apple.

- Read [St. Sabbas the Sanctified and his Holy Lavra](#).
- Visit [this site](#) to learn more about the ancient monastery established in the 5th century by St. Sabas.

Daily Readings for: December 05, 2020 (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: O God, who sent your Only Begotten Son into this world to free the human race from its ancient enslavement, bestow on those who devoutly await him the grace of your compassion from on high, that we may attain the prize of true freedom. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Bishopwyn I \(Bishop's Wine\)](#)
- [Ciastka Miodowe \(Honey Cakes\)](#)
- [Kris Kringle Cookies](#)
- [Rozijnen Koekjes \(Raisin Cookies\)](#)
- [Santa Claus \(St. Nicholas\) Cookies](#)
- [Speculaas or Speculatus II](#)

ACTIVITIES

- [St. Nicholas Day Party](#)
- [St. Nicholas Eve](#)
- [St. Nicholas Puppet Show](#)
- [St. Nicholas' Visit](#)

PRAYERS

- [Advent Wreath Prayers I](#)
- [Advent Wreath Prayers II](#)
- [Jesse Tree Prayer Service](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent \(2nd Plan\)](#)
- [December Devotion: The Immaculate Conception](#)
- [Novena in Honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe](#)
- [Christmas Anticipation Prayer](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent \(1st Plan\)](#)
- [Novena to the Immaculate Conception](#)
- [Collect for the Feast of St. Sabbas](#)

LIBRARY

- [Joyful Expectation of Christmas Among Christians | Pope Benedict XVI](#)

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-05>

Advent: December 6th

Second Sunday of Advent

Old Calendar: Second Sunday of Advent

“As the journey of Advent continues, as we prepare to celebrate the nativity of Christ, John the Baptist’s call to conversion sounds out in our communities. It is a pressing invitation to open our hearts and to welcome the Son of God Who comes among us to make divine judgement manifest. The Father, writes St. John the Evangelist, does not judge anyone, but has entrusted the power of judgement to the Son, because He is the Son of man.



“And it is today, in the present, that we decide our future destiny. It is with our concrete everyday behavior in this life that we determine our eternal fate. At the end of our days on earth, at the moment of death, we will be evaluated on the basis of our likeness or otherwise to the Baby Who is about to be born in the poor grotto of Bethlehem, because He is the measure God has given humanity.

“Through the Gospel John the Baptist continues to speak down the centuries to each generation. His hard clear words bring health to us, the men and women of this day in which even the experience and perception of Christmas often, unfortunately, reflects materialist attitudes. The ‘voice’ of the great prophet asks us to prepare the way for the coming Lord in the deserts of today, internal and external deserts, thirsting for the water of life which is Christ.” — Benedict XVI

Today is the feast of [St. Nicholas](#) which is superseded by the Sunday Liturgy.



[Jesse Tree ~ Joseph](#)

Jerusalem

In Palestine Christians gather today in Jerusalem for the celebration of holy Mass. In Rome they proceed to the stational church “Holy Cross at Jerusalem” which serves to give the atmosphere of the Holy City.

Why “Jerusalem”? Excavations of ancient sites often reveal a number of strata. When enemies destroyed a city, a new one would rise on the same location, so that today there are several layers of remains, one city, as it were, above the other. Our Jerusalem likewise has four strata. The bottommost layer is the Jerusalem of the Jews, that venerable land where the Lord Jesus began His mission of redemption, where He suffered and died. This is the historical Jerusalem so dear to us Christians. Anyone making a pilgrimage to the Holy Land enters that ancient city with holy awe. That Jerusalem, however, lies buried deep.

For us another has been built upon it, the Jerusalem of Christians, God’s kingdom on earth, the holy Church. This city still stands; it is the one which the divine King will enter at Christmas. Now we understand why we will hear so much about Jerusalem during the coming week. We should now clean and adorn our city, improving its streets and avenues through which the Savior will make His entrance. As a motto we should take the words of the precursor, St. John the Baptist: “Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight His paths; let every valley be filled, every hill be leveled.” Holy Mother Church’s message today is that the Savior is coming to the Jerusalem of the Christians, to the Church.



Above the second stratum there arises a third, the heavenly Jerusalem at the end of time. Already now the Church sings of this Jerusalem. For during Advent we await the Savior who will appear on the Last Day to take all into “the new Jerusalem coming down from heaven.”

Finally, there may be recognized a fourth Jerusalem, our souls in sanctifying grace. This city too must be adorned and prepared, for the King will want to enter. That is our present task.

On Epiphany, the climax to the current season, the Church will cry out: “Arise, shine, O Jerusalem, for the glory of the Lord has risen upon thee.” That is the goal.

Today we must prepare for the great King's visit to our city. The whole coming week must be devoted to it. The Church prays: "Awaken our hearts to prepare the way for Your only-begotten Son that we may serve Him with purified hearts."

In the time of the Roman Empire, rulers rode from city to city for the purpose of official visitations. Their appearance, called *epiphany* or *parousia*, was a great event, one preceded by months of preparation. Something analogous takes place in the Jerusalem of our souls. From a high watchtower we see the Lord coming afar off. Suddenly John the Baptist appears; he hurries into the city to announce the King's approach. God condescends to manifest Himself to us in grace; but He demands the proper reception.

Excerpted from *The Church's Year of Grace* by Pius Parsch

Commentary for the Readings in the Extraordinary Form: Second Sunday of

Advent Jesus referred John as "My messenger" who prepared the "way".

John now wanted his disciples to realize that they, too, must follow Christ in this "way". Only through the same Jesus Christ, the long expected Savior, will the "blind" of soul "see;" the "lame" of

character "walk;" the "lepers" of sin become "cleansed;" the "poor" become rich with a new Gospel. (Red figures in picture indicate the blind, the lame, the leper.)

The Epistle points to these interior and social aspects of the "Christ" way: interiorly, by prayer, to "glorify" the Fatherhood of God; socially by our actions, to "receive one another" in the Brotherhood of Man, "even as Christ has received you."



Excerpted from *My Sunday Missal*, Confraternity of the Precious Blood

Daily Readings for: December 06, 2020
(Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: Almighty and merciful God, may no earthly undertaking hinder those who set out in haste to meet your Son, but may our learning of heaven wisdom grant us admittance to his company. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Whole Wheat Sweet Porridge](#)

ACTIVITIES

- [Advent and the Year of the Eucharist](#)
- [Christmas Wheat](#)
- [Posters for Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany](#)
- [Jerusalem Christmas Decorations](#)

PRAYERS

- [Hungarian wheat](#)
- [Advent Prayers](#)
- [Jesse Tree Prayer Service](#)
- [Second Sunday of Advent: Prayer Devotions](#)
- [Advent Table Blessing 1](#)
- [Novena in Honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe](#)
- [Christmas Anticipation Prayer](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent \(1st Plan\)](#)
- [Novena to the Immaculate Conception](#)

LIBRARY

- [Jerusalem, Mother Of All Peoples | Pope Saint John Paul II](#)
- [Jerusalem, Praise Your Saving God | Pope Saint John Paul II](#)
- [The Question of Jerusalem | Archbishop Jean-Louis Tauran](#)

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

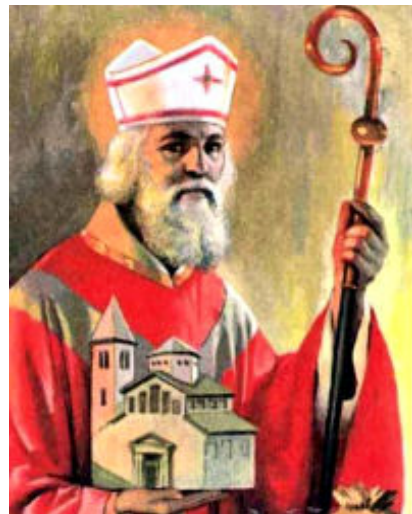
<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-06>

Advent: December 7th

Memorial of St. Ambrose, bishop and doctor

Old Calendar: St. Ambrose; Vigil of the Immaculate Conception

St. Ambrose (340-397) was born at Treves in Gaul, a territory which embraced modern France, Britain, Spain, and part of Africa. He studied in Rome and later became governor of Liguria and Aemelia with residence at Milan. While supervising the election of a new bishop of Milan in 374, he himself was suddenly acclaimed the bishop. He was only a catechumen at the time and was ordained a priest and consecrated a bishop on December 7. He wrote much on the Scriptures and Fathers, preached a homily every Sunday, resisted the interference of the secular powers with the rights of the Church, opposed the heretics, and was instrumental in bringing about the conversion of St. Augustine. He composed many hymns, promoted sacred chant, and took a great interest in the Liturgy.



Jesse Tree ~ Moses

St. Ambrose

Around the year 333 Ambrose was born at Trier, the child of a noble Roman family. After his father's death he went to Rome, and was soon appointed consul with residence at Milan. While attempting to settle a dispute between the Arians and Catholics over the choice of a bishop, he himself was chosen, although only a catechumen at the time. Thereupon he devoted himself wholeheartedly to the study of theology, and gave his possessions to the poor. He was an illustrious preacher, and through his sermons brought

Augustine to the faith and baptized him.

Candid and fearless no matter how strong the opposition, Ambrose was directed to confront Maximus, the murderer of the Emperor Gratian. When Maximus refused to do penance, Ambrose excommunicated him. Later he denied Emperor Theodosius entrance into church for his massacre of the inhabitants of Thessalonica. It was on this occasion that allusion was made to [King] David as a murderer and adulterer, and Ambrose retorted: “You have followed him in sin, now follow him in repentance.” Humbly, Theodosius accepted the penance imposed.

We often meet this saint in the Divine Office as a teacher and as an inspired composer of hymns (fourteen of the hymns attributed to him are definitely authentic, true pearls of religious poetry). His writings are vibrant with ancient Christian liturgical spirit, for his life was wholly rooted in mystery and sacrament. We can profit greatly by reading Ambrose’s works. He is one of the four great Latin Doctors of the Church.

Excerpted from *The Church’s Year of Grace*, Pius Parsch

Patron: bee keepers; bees; candlemakers; chandlers; domestic animals; French Commissariat; learning; Milan, Italy; schoolchildren; students; wax melters; wax refiners.

Symbols: Scourge; beehive; tower; dove; cope and mitre; human bones; scroll with staff of music; pen book and pen; cross; chalice; bull; knotted scourge; two scourges; goose; writing tablet and stylus; heart surmounted with flame; scroll with quotation from writings.

Often portrayed as: Bishop holding a church in his hand; beehive; man arguing with a pagan; with Saint Gregory the Great, Saint Jerome and Saint Augustine of Hippo.

Things To Do:

- See [Celebrating the Feast of St. Ambrose](#) for ideas.
- Read some of the [Writings of St. Ambrose](#), Doctor of the Church.
- Food Ideas: Besides the recipes named for Ambrose, other highlighted recipes are honey cakes or cookies, appropriate since Ambrose is known as the “Honey-Tongued Doctor.”

Daily Readings for: December 07, 2020 (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: O God, who made the Bishop Saint Ambrose a teacher of the Catholic faith and a model of apostolic courage, raise up in your Church men after your own heart to govern her with courage and wisdom. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Genoise Book Cake](#)
- [Honey Chiffon Pie](#)
- [Honey Pie](#)
- [Insalata Ambrosiana](#)
- [Ciastka Miodowe \(Honey Cakes\)](#)
- [Honey Cake](#)
- [Milk and Honey Cookies](#)
- [Costoletta alla Milanese \(Breaded Veal Chops\)](#)
- [Ambrosia Salad](#)

ACTIVITIES

- [Celebrating for the Feast of St. Ambrose](#)
- [Jesse Tree, Day 5 - Abraham](#)

PRAYERS

- [Advent Wreath Prayers I](#)
- [Advent Wreath Prayers II](#)

- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent (2nd Plan)
- December Devotion: The Immaculate Conception
- Novena in Honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe
- Christmas Anticipation Prayer
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent (1st Plan)
- Novena to the Immaculate Conception

LIBRARY

- Saint Ambrose of Milan | Pope Benedict XVI

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-07>

Advent: December 8th

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception

Old Calendar: Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, I class.

Today the Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, the solemn dogma defined by Blessed Pope Pius IX in 1854. As Our Lady Immaculately Conceived is the patroness of the United States of America, this is a holy day of obligation in the United States.

Through the centuries the Church has become ever more aware that Mary, “full of grace” through God, was redeemed from the moment of her conception. That is what the dogma of the Immaculate Conception confesses, as Blessed Pope Pius IX proclaimed on December 8, 1854: “The most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Saviour of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin.” — *Catechism of the Catholic Church*



Jesse Tree ~ Mary

Immaculate Conception of Mary

“Hail Mary, full of grace”. For thousands of centuries, millions of times per day the Virgin Mary is greeted by the faithful with the greeting of the Archangel, that we hear resonating anew in today’s Gospel. The sons of the Church learn from the words of the Archangel Gabriel that the fullness of the mystery of God’s grace was realized in Holy Mary. St Paul the Apostle teaches us that the Father made all fullness dwell in His

Incarnate Son (c.f. Col 1:12-20), which overflows from Christ's head and spills out on His Mystical Body that is the Church. Before descending in Body, Christ's fullness was spread in a unique and unrepeatable way on Mary, predestined from eternity to be the Mother of God.

Significantly in the first reading, the liturgy recalls the figure of Eve, the mother of all the living. The Fathers of the Church saw in Mary, the new Eve that unties the knot bound by the first woman. The knot of disobedience tied by Eve, was untied by the obedience of Mary. As Eve was created in purity and integrity, also the new Eve was miraculously preserved from the contamination of original sin because she had to give humanity the Word, who was incarnated for our ransom.

Saint Irenaeus compares the virginity of the pure earth from which Adam was drawn to the virginity of the immaculate humanity of Mary from which the Second Adam was drawn. 'And as the protoplast himself, Adam, had his substance from untilled and as yet virgin soil (for God had not yet sent rain, and man had not tilled the ground (Genesis 2:5)) so did He who is the Word, recapitulating Adam in Himself, rightly receive a birth, enabling Him to gather up Adam [into Himself], from Mary, who was as yet a virgin' (*Adversus hereses* III, 21:10).

Blessed Pope Pius IX on the 8th of December 1854 proclaimed the Dogma of the faith revealed by God that the Blessed Virgin Mary *"in the first instant of her conception, by a singular privilege and grace granted by God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the human race, was preserved exempt from all stain of original sin"* (Denz.-Schonm, 2083). If the official proclamation of the dogma is relatively recent, the profession of faith by Christians and the liturgy is very ancient in this regard. Furthermore, four years later the same Virgin Mary, appearing in Lourdes to St Bernadette, confirmed the truth of the doctrine by presenting herself with the title 'I am the Immaculate Conception'.



Mary's predestination to this singular grace—consistent with the suspension of the universal decree by which every man, from the moment of his conception is contaminated with original sin—leads us to ponder in the deepest depths the mystery of the Most Holy Trinity's salvific plan. God, One and Triune, had foreseen from the very beginning the future incarnation of the Word culminating in the redemption of human

nature that had fallen into sin. He therefore predestined pure Mary, so that He could draw from her uncontaminated humanity, which the Son could adopt in order to re-establish in Himself the original purity of creation and reorientate it to eternal glory.

For this reason, in the second reading of today's liturgy, St Paul reminds us that God wants to see us holy and immaculate before Him. The purity of our origins seemed to be irredeemably lost. However, in Immaculate Mary, God found the perfect solution to reverse the disaster made from the misuse of our liberty, and returned humanity to the original purity that seemed hopelessly lost.

Mary's Immaculate Conception is a direct consequence of her Divine Maternity. St Anslem of Aosta wrote: 'Assuredly, it was fitting that the Virgin be beautified with a purity than which a greater cannot be conceived, except for God's. For, toward her, God the Father was so disposed to give His only Son who was naturally one and the same common Son of God the Father and of the Virgin.' (*De conceptu virginali et originali peccato*, XVIII)

This link between the privilege of Divine Maternity and Mary's Immaculate Conception results also in her superiority with respect to us. She is a perfect image of the Church in heaven, the new triumphant Jerusalem, that won't have any marks nor will there be pain and death. This is why today's preface recites: '...she was to be a worthy mother of your Son, your sign of favour to the church at its beginning, and the promise of its perfection as the bride of Christ, radiant in beauty'. Also in heaven Mary is not and will never be only a disciple, but her Son's most exalted. She is and will always be the Mother of God, the Mother of the Church, the Queen of the Angels and Saints. Therefore, the preface of the Mass adds: '...You chose her from all creatures to be our advocate with you and our pattern of holiness.'



Mary was Immaculate because she had to be the Mother of God. She, herself has received the original grace of purity and the final state of the blessed life that we also, by collaborating with Divine Grace, hope one day to receive.

Immaculate Mary is full of grace. She is not only Christ's disciple, who with the help of grace has overcome the chains of sin, but she is *totius Trinitatis nobile triclinium*, the noble resting place of the Holy Trinity (St Thomas Aquinas, *Exposito Salutationis Angelicae*, I). The Immaculate, full of grace, will always be Mother and Queen for that

elect part of the Church that we hope one day to join, that will one day joyfully sing before the Almighty.

From the [Congregation for the Clergy](#)

Patron: United States.

Symbols: crown and monogram; lily; enclosed garden; crown of stars; glass (symbol of purity) lily often placed in a vase of transparent glass; lily of the valley.

Things to Do:

- The dogma of the Immaculate Conception lends itself to fruitful meditation and should be taught to children. The doctrine of original sin, the sin of Adam and its effects on the human race, is a good beginning for study. For the best explanation of the teachings of the Church on this, see the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, numbers 386-412. Also, you might read the Apostolic Constitution [The Immaculate Conception \(Ineffabilis Deus\)](#) where Pope Pius IX defined *ex cathedra* the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The decree was promulgated on 8 December 1854, the date of the annual Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

Other reading from the Catholic Culture Library:

- Pope Pius IX's bull, [Ubi Primum \(On The Immaculate Conception\)](#) an encyclical of Pope Pius IX to the bishops of the Catholic Church asking them for opinion on the definition of a dogma on the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary. It was issued on 2 February 1849;
- [Ad Diem Illum Laetissimum \(On The Immaculate Conception\)](#) by Pius X;
- [Fulgens Corona \(Proclaiming A Marian Year To Commemorate The Centenary Of The Definition Of The Dogma Of The Immaculate Conception\)](#) by Pope Pius XII;
- [On Devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary \(Marialis Cultus\)](#) by Pope Paul VI;
- [Immaculate Conception Defined by Pius IX](#) by Pope John Paul II;
- [John Duns Scotus: Champion of the Immaculate Conception](#) by Brother

John M. Samaha, S.M.;

- [The Message of the Virgin of Lourdes](#) by Bishop Donald Montrose, D.D.;
 - [The Immaculate Conception](#) by Abbot Gueranger
 - Mary as the Immaculate Conception is the patroness of the United States. Visit or take a virtual tour of the [Basilica of the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception](#), America's patronal church.
 - This day would also be appropriate for parents to plan their approach on family sex education, as it is the privilege and duty of parents to teach their own children in this area.
 - Make a Mary candle for the feast of the Immaculate Conception. See [Celebrating for the Feast of the Immaculate Conception](#) for details and other ideas.
 - Prepare an all white meal for dinner and then discuss with your children the dogma of the Immaculate Conception with the visual aids of dinner showing the purity and the stainlessness of Mary's soul. Read [Teaching the Immaculate Conception](#) and [Advent and the Immaculate Conception](#) for discussion ideas.
- Ideas for dinner:

Appetizers: Rice crackers and white cheeses; **Soups:** cream soups, such as clam chowder, potato soup, cream of celery; **Main Course:** chicken breasts, pasta with alfredo sauce; **Side Dishes:** mashed potatoes, white rice, cauliflower with (or without) white cheese sauce, white bread (with crusts removed), white corn; **Dessert:** White cake with white icing, meringue kisses, vanilla ice cream, whipped cream, white chocolate.

- The special treat for this feast is [Moravian Spritz](#), or gingerbread cookies, loaded with fine, aromatic spices. These are mixed on the vigil, December 7. Or make your favorite gingerbread cookie. Perhaps for this solemnity the family could make a gingerbread house or [Gingerbread Bowls](#).
- Today, plant an [Immaculate Conception Rose Bush](#). During this winter season, it is also a good time to plan a [Mary Garden](#). [Flower Theology](#) by John Stokes, the website [Mary's Gardens](#) and the book *Mary's Flowers, Gardens, Legends and Meditations* by Mary's Gardens Associate, Vincenzina Krymow, are good

beginnings for planning your garden.

- No room for a garden? No time to nurture nature? Read [Flowers for the Fairest](#) by Daniel Foley to read about flowers appropriate for Our Lady, and purchase a small bouquet or a few flowers...real or silk to display for feasts of Mary.

Daily Readings for: [December 08, 2020](#) (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: O God, who by the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin prepared a worthy dwelling for your Son, grant, we pray, that, as you preserved her from every stain by virtue of the Death of your Son, which you foresaw, so, through her intercession, we, too, may be cleansed and admitted to your presence. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Mexican Wedding Cookies](#)
- [Moravian Hearts](#)
- [Crown Cake](#)
- [Moravian Spice Cookies](#)

ACTIVITIES

- [Cut-outs and Shadow Boxes](#)
- [Feasts of Mary in the Family](#)
- [Marian Hymn: 'Tis Said of Our Dear Lady](#)
- [Marian Hymn: A Single Branch Three Roses Bore](#)
- [Marian Hymn: Ave Maria Dear](#)
- [Marian Hymn: Ave Maris Stella](#)

- Marian Hymn: Beautiful, Glorious
- Marian Hymn: Behold a Branch is Growing Or Lo, How a Rose Er Blooming
- Marian Hymn: Lourdes Hymn or Immaculate Mary
- Marian Hymn: Salve Regina
- Marian Hymn: Stella Matutina
- Marian Hymn: Virgin Blessed, Thou Star the Fairest
- Mary Garden
- Advent — The Immaculate Conception
- Celebrating for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception
- Celebrating the Feast of the Immaculate Conception in the Home
- Celebrating the Feasts of the Blessed Virgin
- Feasts of Our Lady in the Home
- Immaculate Conception
- Immaculate Conception Rose Bush
- Mary Candle I
- Mary Candle II
- Nameday Ideas for the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception
- Teaching the Immaculate Conception

PRAYERS

- Advent Wreath Prayers I
- Advent Wreath Prayers II
- Readings and Hymns for the Immaculate Conception
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent (2nd Plan)
- December Devotion: The Immaculate Conception
- Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Litany of Loreto)
- Novena in Honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe

- Christmas Anticipation Prayer
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent (1st Plan)
- Litany of the Immaculate Conception
- Table Blessing for the Feasts of the Mother of God
- Novena to the Immaculate Conception

LIBRARY

- For the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Proclamation of the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception | Pope Saint Pius X
- Holy Days of Obligation, Or Holy Days of Opportunity | Brother John M. Samaha S.M.
- The Immaculate Conception (*Ineffabilis Deus*) | Pope Pius IX
- The Immaculate Conception of the Most Blessed Virgin | Abbot Gueranger O.S.B.
- Ubi Primum (On The Immaculate Conception) | Pope Pius IX

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-08>

Advent: December 9th

Wednesday of the Second Week of Advent; Optional Memorial of St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin (USA)

Today the Church in the United States celebrates the optional memorial of St. Juan Diego, an Indian convert, to whom the Virgin Mary appeared as he was going to Mass in Tlatlelolco, Mexico. Our Lady asked him to tell the Bishop that she desired a shrine to be built on the spot to manifest her love for all mankind. She left a marvelous portrait of herself on the mantle of Juan Diego as a sign for the Bishop. This miraculous image has proved to be ageless, and is kept in the shrine built in her honor, the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas.



Jesse Tree ~ King Solomon

St. Juan Diego

Little is known about the life of Juan Diego before his conversion, but tradition and archaeological and iconographical sources, along with the most important and oldest indigenous document on the event of Guadalupe, “El Nican Mopohua” (written in Náhuatl with Latin characters, 1556, by the Indigenous writer Antonio Valeriano), give some information on the life of the saint and the apparitions.

Juan Diego was born in 1474 with the name “Cuauhtlatoatzin” (“the talking eagle”) in Cuautlitlán, today part of Mexico City, Mexico. He was a gifted member of the Chichimeca people, one of the more culturally advanced groups living in the Anáhuac Valley.

When he was 50 years old he was baptized by a Franciscan priest, Fr. Peter da Gand, one of the first Franciscan missionaries. On December 9, 1531, when Juan Diego was on his way to morning Mass, the Blessed Mother appeared to him on Tepeyac Hill, the outskirts of what is now Mexico City. She asked him to go to the Bishop and to request in her name that a shrine be built at Tepeyac, where she promised to pour out her grace upon those who invoked her. The Bishop, who did not believe Juan Diego, asked for a sign to prove that the apparition was true. On December 12, Juan Diego returned to Tepeyac. Here, the Blessed Mother told him to climb the hill and to pick the flowers that he would find in bloom. He obeyed, and although it was winter time, he found roses blooming. He gathered the flowers and took them to Our Lady who carefully placed them in his mantle and told him to take them to the Bishop as “proof”. When he opened his mantle, the flowers fell on the ground and there remained impressed, in place of the flowers, an image of the Blessed Mother, the apparition at Tepeyac.

With the Bishop’s permission, Juan Diego lived the rest of his life as a hermit in a small hut near the chapel where the miraculous image was placed for veneration. Here he cared for the church and the first pilgrims who came to pray to the Mother of Jesus.

Much deeper than the exterior grace of having been chosen as Our Lady’s messenger, Juan Diego received the grace of interior enlightenment and from that moment, he began a life dedicated to prayer and the practice of virtue and boundless love of God and neighbour. He died in 1548 and was buried in the first chapel dedicated to the Virgin of Guadalupe. He was beatified on May 6, 1990 by Pope John Paul II in the Basilica of Santa Maria di Guadalupe, Mexico City.



The miraculous image, which is preserved in the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, shows a woman with native features and dress. She is supported by an angel whose wings are reminiscent of one of the major gods of the traditional religion of that area. The moon is beneath her feet and her blue mantle is covered with gold stars. The black girdle about her waist signifies that she is pregnant. Thus, the image graphically depicts the fact that Christ is to be “born” again among the peoples of the New World, and is a message as relevant to the “New World” today as it was during the lifetime of Juan Diego.

Patron: Mexico.

Symbols: Pictured carrying a tilma full of roses.

Things to Do:

- Read Pope John Paul II's [homily at the canonization](#) of St. Juan Diego.
- Pray to St. Juan Diego for migrant Mexican workers who come to the USA trying to support their families.
- If you know of a Mexican family who may need your help, surprise them with a food basket or offer them a ride if they don't have a car. If you speak Spanish, see if they need an interpreter for an important appointment.
- Meditate on Our Lady's beautiful words to St. Juan Diego: "Hear and let it penetrate into your heart, my dear little son; let nothing discourage you, nothing depress you. Let nothing alter your heart or your countenance. Also, do not fear any illness or vexation, anxiety or pain. Am I not here who am your Mother? Are you not under my shadow and protection? Am I not your fountain of life? Are you not in the crossing of my arms? Is there anything else that you need?"
- Cook some Mexican dishes for dinner and bake a Rose Petal Pound Cake or other rose theme for dessert in honor of St. Juan Diego.
- From the Catholic Culture Library:
 - [On The Canonization Of First Native American](#)
 - [Mexico Has Seen a Great Light](#)
 - [Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe](#).
- Recommended Reading: For children: [The Lady of Guadalupe](#) by Tomie dePaola. For adults: [The Wonder of Guadalupe](#) by Francis Johnston.
- For music for Juan Diego's and Our Lady of Guadalupe's feast, see www.savae.org. The San Antonio Vocal Arts Ensemble have two cds of authentic music by Mexican medieval composers. Very beautiful!
- Visit [Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas](#) for detailed accounts on the apparition to Juan Diego. You can also send online cards from this site. See also [Patron Saints Index](#).

Daily Readings for: December 09, 2020 (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: Almighty God, who command us to prepare the way for Christ the Lord, grant in your kindness, we pray, that no infirmity may weary us as we long for the comforting presence of our heavenly physician. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

O God, who by means of Saint Juan Diego showed the love of the most holy Virgin Mary for your people, grant, through his intercession, that, by following the counsels our Mother gave at Guadalupe, we may be ever constant in fulfilling your will. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Empanadas](#)
- [Mexican Chicken with Fruits](#)
- [Mexican Cold Fish](#)
- [Mexican Fritters](#)
- [Mexican Rice](#)
- [Mole Poblano](#)
- [Rose Petal Coconut Cake](#)
- [Rose Petal Pound Cake](#)

ACTIVITIES

- [Namedays](#)
- [Religion in the Home for Elementary School: December](#)
- [Religion in the Home for Preschool: December](#)
- [What is a Nameday?](#)

PRAYERS

- [Advent Wreath Prayers I](#)
- [Advent Wreath Prayers II](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent \(2nd Plan\)](#)
- [December Devotion: The Immaculate Conception](#)
- [Novena in Honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe](#)
- [Prayer to Jesus Christ for Immigrants](#)
- [Christmas Anticipation Prayer](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent \(1st Plan\)](#)

LIBRARY

- [On The Canonization Of First Native American | Bishops' Commissions for Indigenous Peoples and for Social Welfare](#)

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-09>

Advent: December 10th

Thursday of the Second Week of Advent; Optional Memorial of Our Lady of Loreto

Old Calendar: St. Melchiades, pope and martyr; St. Eulalia (Hist)

In 2019 Pope Francis added this Optional Memorial to the universal Roman Calendar. The title Our Lady of Loreto refers to the Holy House of Loreto, the house in which Mary was born, and in which the Word was made flesh at the Annunciation. Tradition says that a band of angels scooped up the little house from the Holy Land, and transported it first to Tersato, Dalmatia in 1291, then Recanati, Italy in 1294, and finally to Loreto, Italy where it has been for centuries. It was this translation of the Holy House and the longstanding of the structure



Our Lady of Loreto is the patron of builders, construction workers, and aviation. It is the first shrine of international renown dedicated to the Blessed Virgin, and has been known as a Marian center for centuries. Popes have always held the Shrine of Loreto in special esteem, and it is under their direct authority and protection. A replica of an ancient statue of Our Lady which is found there, one of the “Black Madonnas.” The original statue made of cedar from Lebanon was destroyed in a fire in 1921.

St. Melchiades “who suffered much during the persecution of Maximianus; when at last peace was restored to the Church, died in the Lord.” He was an African whom St. Augustine calls “the true child of the peace of Jesus Christ.” He ruled the Church of God in the last period of the Christian persecution from 311-314; hence the title of martyr is applied to him in a wider sense. His was the good fortune of witnessing the beginning of an era of peace, for in 312 the Emperor Constantine granted freedom to the Church. According to the the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite today is his feast.

Historically, today is the feast of St. Eulalia of Merida, Spain's best known virgin martyr. Veneration of St. Eulalia was already popular with Christians by AD 350; relics from her were distributed through Iberia. Bishop Fidelis of Merida rebuilt a basilica in her honor around 560 AD. Her shrine was the most popular in Visigothic Spain. In 780 her body was transferred to Oviedo by King Silo. It lies in a coffin of Arab silver donated by Afonso VI in 1075. In 1639, she was made patron saint of Oviedo.



Jesse Tree ~ Samuel

Our Lady of Loreto

The shrine of the Holy House of Loreto is located along the Adriatic Sea coast of Italy, in a small town located three hours from Rome. The house has been said to have been miraculously transported from Palestine to Italy, and by the 14th century this shrine in Loreto is one of the most famous shrines of Our Lady in Europe.



The large basilica provides the setting of the small house within the basilica itself. Though the rough walls of the little building have been raised in height and are cased externally in richly sculptured marble, the interior measures only thirty-one feet by thirteen feet.

Within the house an altar stands at one end beneath a statue, blackened over time from the smoke of burning candles and incense, of the Virgin Mother and her Divine Infant. The current statue is a 1920 replacement of damaged ancient original made of cedars of Lebanon. The replacement is made of cedar wood from the Vatican.

The inscription on the altar, *Hic Verbum caro factum est*, is a reminder that this building is honored by Christians as the house at Nazareth in which the Holy Family lived, and site of the Incarnation, when the Word became Flesh. Another inscription of the sixteenth century which decorates the eastern façade of the basilica sets forth at greater length the tradition which makes this shrine so famous.

Christian pilgrim, you have before your eyes the Holy House of Loreto, venerable throughout the world on account of the Divine mysteries accomplished in it and the

glorious miracles herein wrought. It is here that most holy Mary, Mother of God, was born; here that she was saluted by the Angel, here that the eternal Word of God was made Flesh. Angels conveyed this House from Palestine to the town Tersato in Illyria in the year of salvation 1291 in the pontificate of Nicholas IV. Three years later, in the beginning of the pontificate of Boniface VIII, it was carried again by the ministry of angels and placed in a wood near this hill, in the vicinity of Recanati, in the March of Ancona; where having changed its station thrice in the course of a year, at length, by the will of God, it took up its permanent position on this spot three hundred years ago [now, of course, more than 600]. Ever since that time, both the extraordinary nature of the event having called forth the admiring wonder of the neighboring people and the fame of the miracles wrought in this sanctuary having spread far and wide, this Holy House, whose walls do not rest on any foundation and yet remain solid and uninjured after so many centuries, has been held in reverence by all nations.

Adapted from [The Catholic Encyclopedia](#).

Things to Do:

- Why is Our Lady of Loreto connected with aviation? Read these two articles, [Did angels really carry the Holy House of Mary to Loreto, Italy?](#) at Catholic News Agency and [Our Lady of Loreto and Aviation](#) from “All About Mary” at the University of Dayton.
- Find out the connection the University of Notre Dame has with [Our Lady of Loreto](#).
- Visit the website of [Sanctuary of the Holy House of Loreto](#).
- Here is further reading about the [Basilica of the Holy House \(*Basilica della Santa Casa*\)](#)
- The Litany of Loreto originated from this Shrine. Read about [the Litany of Loreto in Context](#).
- See [The Illustrated Litany of Loreto](#) for visual meditation on the Litany of

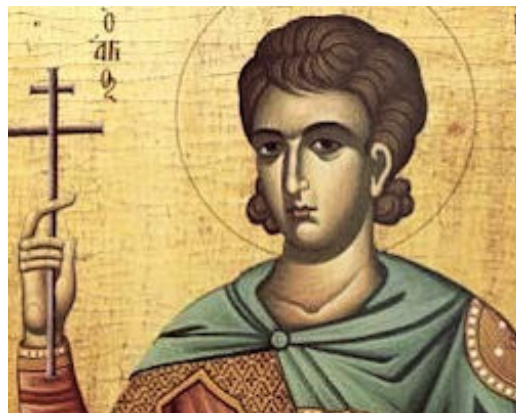


Loreto.

St. Melchiades (also known as St. Miltiades)

Two popes had been exiled by Emperor Maxentius, and for nearly two more years the Church in Rome was steeped in turmoil, making it impossible to choose a pope. Finally, Miltiades, an African, was elected. He had served as a priest under Marcellinus during the terrible Diocletian persecution.

Now, however, he witnessed the effects of a kinder, more generous Roman government. Indeed, the Church would actually be favored with splendid gifts. By 311 the Church began to enjoy a peace resulting from a decree of toleration issued in both the East and the West. Emperor Maxentius ordered the properties of the Church restored. These included the land and buildings that had been confiscated during the reign of Emperor Diocletian. In 312 for the first time since the outbreak of persecution, a pope was able to preside over the celebration of Easter in full possession of the Church's holy assets.



Pope Miltiades worked diligently in a difficult time of transition. His edicts included

forbidding the Christians to fast on Thursday and Sunday (the days during which the pagans kept their fasts) and directing that the Eucharist plate blessed by the bishop be carried to the various churches.

Constantine, having been proclaimed emperor in Gaul, now marched on Rome. The sign of the cross had been revealed to him in a vision where he was told that “by this sign shalt thou conquer.” Constantine ordered his standards changed, and for the first time in history, the sign of peace was borne by an army. Constantine's legions defeated Maxentius, and the year 312 ushered in a new era, an era of peace; the Christians were truly set free. During the emperor's stay in Rome, the famous Lateran palace was given to Pope Miltiades by Fausta, Constantine's wife. The Lateran served as the papal residence for some four hundred years.

Less than a year later, a schism broke out in North Africa. Headed by a rigorist named Donatus, the faction objected to the policies of the bishop of Carthage, Caecilian. Bypassing the pope, they appealed directly to Constantine to intervene. The emperor, annoyed that he should be called on to settle disputes among the clergy, commissioned Miltiades and three other Gallic bishops to rectify the matter. The pope gathered fifteen additional bishops and held a synod in the great Lateran palace. The decision of this synod was to condemn Donatus and his party and to support the true bishop, Caecilian. The Donatists (as they later became called) appealed again to Constantine, but by the

time another council could be called, Pope Miltiades had died.

St. Miltiades was an excellent pontiff who guided the Church wisely during a difficult time of changeover. Pope Miltiades was the last pope to be buried in a catacomb in the cemetery of Calixtus. His feast is celebrated on December 10.

Excerpted from *The Popes: A Papal History*, J.V. Bartlett

St. Eulalia

St. Eulalia descended from one of the most prominent families in Spain. She was educated in the Christian religion and was taught the sentiments of perfect piety. From her infancy she distinguished herself by an admirable sweetness of temper, modesty and devotion.

She showed a great love of the holy state of virginity, and by her seriousness and her contempt of dress, ornaments diversions and worldly company, she gave early signs of her sincere desire to lead a heavenly life on earth. Her heart was raised above the world before she was thought capable of knowing it, so that its amusements, which usually fill the minds of youth, had no charms for her, and every day of her life she continued to grow in virtue.

She was just twelve years old when the bloody edicts of the Emperor Diocletian were issued, by which it was ordered that all persons, without exception of age, sex, or profession, should be compelled to offer sacrifice to the gods of the empire.

Eulalia, although young, took the publication of this order as a sign of battle, but her mother, observing her impatient ardor for martyrdom, carried her into the country. However, the young saint quickly found a means to make her escape by night, and after much fatigue, arrived at Merida before daybreak.

That same morning, as soon as the court convened, she presented herself before the cruel judge, whose name was Dacian, and reproached him with impiety in attempting to destroy souls by compelling them to renounce the only true God.

The governor then commanded her to be seized. First, employing caresses, Dacian presented to her the advantages which her birth, youth and fortune gave her in the world



and the grief which her disobedience would bring to her parents. Seeing that these temptations had no effect, he began to threaten her, placing the cruelest instruments of torture before her eyes, saying to her, “All this you shall escape if you will but touch a little salt and frankincense with the tip of your finger.”

Provoked at these seducing flatteries, she threw down the idol, trampled upon the cake which was laid for the sacrifice and spat at the judge—an action only to be excused by her youth and inattention under the influence of a warm zeal, and fear of the snares which were laid before her.

Upon the judge’s order, two executioners began to tear her tender sides with iron hooks, so as to leave the very bones bare. While this was happening, she called the strokes the trophies of Christ. Next, lighted torches were applied to her breasts and sides: under which torment, instead of groans, nothing was heard from her mouth but thanksgivings. The fire at length catching her hair surrounded her head and face, and the saint was stifled by the smoke and flame.

History says that a white dove seemed to come out of her mouth, and to wing its way upward when the holy martyr expired: at which prodigy the executioners were so much terrified that they fled and left the body.

Her relics are kept with great veneration at Oviedo, where she is honored as patroness. The Roman Martyrology mentions her name on December 10.

Excerpted from *Butler’s Lives of the Saints*

Things to Do:

- View this [short YouTube video](#) of the Fiesta of St. Eulalia in El Ramu, Spain to see how devotion to this saint is still celebrated.

Daily Readings for: December 10, 2020 (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the paths of your Only Begotten Son, that through his coming, we may be found worthy to serve you with minds made pure. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with

you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

O God, who at the announcement of your angel willed that your Word would take flesh in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary, grant, we pray, to us who remember this great mystery in this holy place, the ability to celebrate both in faith and in holiness of life, the immensity of your mercy. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Lehi Lentils](#)
- [Whole Wheat-Barley Bread](#)

ACTIVITIES

- [Advent Folksong: Maria Walks Amid the Thorn](#)
- [Advent Penances](#)

PRAYERS

- [Advent Wreath Prayers I](#)
- [Advent Wreath Prayers II](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent \(2nd Plan\)](#)
- [December Devotion: The Immaculate Conception](#)
- [Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary \(Litany of Loreto\)](#)
- [Novena in Honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe](#)
- [Collect of the Mass of Pope St. Melchiades](#)
- [Christmas Anticipation Prayer](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent \(1st Plan\)](#)
- [Prayer to Our Lady of Loreto for Flying](#)

LIBRARY

- [Ecclesia in Africa | Pope Saint John Paul II](#)
- [The Holy House of Nazareth | Zsolt Aradi](#)
- [The Home of Mary | Pope Francis](#)

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-10>

Advent: December 11th

Friday of the Second Week of Advent; Optional Memorial of St. Damasus I, pope

Old Calendar: St. Damasus, pope and confessor

St. Damasus was Supreme Pontiff from 366 to 384. He was a very learned man, well versed in the Scriptures. He commissioned St. Jerome to complete the translation of the Bible into the Latin language. Shortly after his reign the 72 books of the Bible, hitherto scattered in different parts of the Orient, were collected into one volume. He defended the rights of the Holy See, and beautified the Roman resting places of the Christian dead and of the saints. He also confirmed the practice of singing the Psalms day and night in the churches and adding a Glory Be at the end of each Psalm.



Jesse Tree ~ Jesse

St. Damasus

On Liberius' death, riots broke out over the election of a successor. The majority favored Damasus, who was born in Rome of Spanish descent. He had served as a deacon under Liberius and upheld the Nicene Creed. In less than a month, Damasus was installed in the Lateran palace. A minority, however, refused to accept the decision; they set up the antipope Ursinus. As the violence continued, Emperor Valentinian, who now ruled the West, was compelled to intercede and expel the antipope.

Pope Damasus fostered the development of the Church during this period of peace by publishing a list of the books of both the Old and New Testaments. He also encouraged his longtime friend and secretary, St. Jerome, to translate the Bible into Latin. This

Vulgate edition continues to serve the Church usefully. Damasus himself composed eloquent verse which he had inscribed on marble slabs and placed over the tombs of martyrs and popes alike. But Damasus is best known for his devoted project in the catacombs. He ardently searched for the tombs of martyrs which had been both blocked up and hidden during previous persecutions. He lighted the passages and stairwells of the catacombs, encouraging pilgrimages to the martyrs. He did much to beautify existing churches, such as building the baptistery in St. Peter's and laying down marble pavement in the basilica of St. Sebastian.

Damasus was a vigorous defender of the orthodoxy, as well. He condemned the heresies of such men as Macedonius and Apollinaris and continued the march against Eastern Arians. Although Emperor Valentinian was a Catholic, his less capable brother Valens was under the Arian influence. Valens kept the Eastern bishops in turmoil until his death in 378 by the determined Goths. Emperor Theodosius, who succeeded Valens, supported the orthodox and convened the Second Ecumenical Council at Constantinople in 381. The council settled the dispute by recondemning Arianism and adopting the pope's teachings.

The chair of St. Peter was never more respected than during the pontificate of Damasus. He tirelessly promoted the Roman primacy, successfully persuading the government to recognize the Holy See as a court of first instance, although it declined to give the pope himself any particular immunity against the civil courts. Next in hierarchy came Alexandria, founded by St. Mark, and then Antioch, where Peter reigned before leaving for Rome.

Pious Pope Damasus died in December of 384 after a reign of eighteen years.

— *The Popes: A Papal History*, J.V. Bartlett

Patron: Archeologists.

Things to Do:

- Learn more about [St. Damasus](#).
- Read about the [Catacombs of St. Callistus](#) where Pope St. Damasus wrote an inscription on the tomb of Pope St Cornelius.
- St. Damasus I commissioned St. Jerome to revise a translation of Scripture. Spend some time reading the Bible.

- See [Celebrating the Feast of St. Damasus](#) for ideas.

Daily Readings for: [December 11, 2020](#) (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: Grant that your people, we pray, almighty God, may be ever watchful for the coming of your Only Begotten Son, that, as the author of our salvation himself has taught us, we may hasten, alert and with lighted lamps, to meet him when he comes. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever.

Grant, we pray, O Lord, that we may constantly exalt the merits of your Martyrs, whom Pope Saint Damasus so venerated and loved. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Skewered Beef Roman Style](#)

ACTIVITIES

- [Advent and the Year of the Eucharist](#)
- [Celebrating for the Feast of Pope St. Damasus I](#)

PRAYERS

- [Advent Wreath Prayers I](#)
- [Advent Wreath Prayers II](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent \(2nd Plan\)](#)
- [December Devotion: The Immaculate Conception](#)
- [Novena in Honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe](#)

- Christmas Anticipation Prayer
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent (1st Plan)

LIBRARY

- Catacombs: Witness To Early Heroism | Pope Saint John Paul II
- Eastern Orthodoxy: Primacy and Reunion | James Likoudis

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-11>

Advent: December 12th

Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe (USA)

Old Calendar: Our Lady of Guadalupe (Third Class, U.S.); St. Valery (Hist); St. Finian (Hist)

“Rejoice: the Lord is nigh.” As Christmas draws near, the Church emphasizes the joy which should be in our hearts over all that the birth of our Savior means for us. The great joy of Christians is to see the day drawing nigh when the Lord will come again in His glory to lead them into His kingdom. The oft-repeated *Veni* (“Come”) of Advent is an echo not only of the prophets but also of the conclusion of the Apocalypse of St. John: “Come, Lord Jesus,” the last words of the New Testament.

In 1910 Our Lady of Guadalupe was declared Patroness of Latin America, and in 1945 Pope Pius XII declared Her to be the Empress of all the Americas. She appeared to an Indian convert named Juan Diego on December 9, 1531. She left a marvelous portrait of herself on the mantle of Juan Diego. This miraculous image has proved to be ageless and is kept in the shrine built in her honor, the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe.



Jesse Tree ~ King David

Our Lady of Guadalupe

“Hear me and understand well, my son the least, that nothing should frighten or grieve you. Let not your heart be disturbed. Do not fear that sickness, nor any other sickness or anguish. Am I not here, who is your Mother? Are you not under my protection? Am I not

your health? Are you not happily within my fold? What else do you wish? Do not grieve nor be disturbed by anything.” — Our Lady to Juan Diego

In the winter of 1531, a poor, 57-year-old Aztec Indian living five miles outside of Mexico City encountered a miraculous happening on his way to morning Mass. First he heard strange music coming from Tepeyac Hill, and then he heard a woman’s voice calling his name. Juan Diego climbed the hill and encountered a young woman, appearing to be of his own people in physical appearance and dress. The woman identified herself as the Virgin Mary, and told Juan Diego to ask the bishop of Mexico City to build a church on the hill to assist in the conversion of the nation and be a source of consolation to the people.



Juan Diego obeyed the request, but the bishop was skeptical regarding the message, even though he perceived that Juan was a humble, and well meaning Catholic. Juan reported the bishop’s doubt to Our Lady at Tepeyac Hill, and she asked him to return to the bishop once again, bearing the same message. The bishop once again heard the story, and told Juan Diego to ask Our Lady for a sign that it was indeed herself that wished for the church to be built.

When he returned to the hill, Mary gave Juan Diego such a sign. Miraculously, roses appeared on the hill in the middle of winter, and Juan gathered them in his tilma, or cloak. Our Lady arranged the roses in his tilma with her own hands, and Juan returned to the bishop’s presence. When Juan released the tilma, allowing the flowers to fall to the floor, it was revealed that a miraculous image of Our Lady had imprinted itself on his tilma (see above).

The bishop immediately fell to his knees, and came to believe in Juan Diego’s message. A church was built on the spot of the apparition, as Mary had requested, and 8 million people converted to Catholicism in a short period of time upon hearing of or viewing the miraculous image of Our Lady.

The tilma of Juan Diego has been the subject of much modern research. The tilma, woven out of coarse cactus fiber, should have disintegrated after 20 years, but although over 500 years have passed the tilma is still in perfect condition. The pupils of Mary in the picture reflect the Indians and clergy present at the time of the first revelation of the image. No paint was used, and chemical analysis has not been able to identify the color imprint. Additionally, studies have revealed that the stars on Mary’s mantle match

exactly what a Mexican would have seen in the sky in December of 1531.

Patron: The Americas; pro-life movement.

Things to Do:

- Start a novena to Our Lady of Guadalupe.
- If you live close to La Crosse, WI visit the beautiful [Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe](#); if not make a virtual visit.
- [Read more](#) about this title of Our Lady.
- Make a sacrifice, say a prayer or visit the Blessed Sacrament for an end to abortion.
- If your parish is having a pro-life Mass or holy hour try to attend.
- Have a party, which includes a procession and a special Mexican dinner to celebrate the feast.
- See [Celebrating the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe](#) for ideas.

St. Valery

Saint Valery was born at Auvergne in the sixth century, where in his childhood he kept his father's sheep. He desired to study and begged a teacher in a nearby school to trace the letters and teach them to him, which the schoolmaster was happy to do. He soon knew how to read and write, and the first use he made of his knowledge was to transcribe the Psalter; he then learned it by heart. He began to frequent the church, and love of his religion soon burnt strongly in his heart.



He was still young when he took the monastic habit in the neighboring monastery of Saint Anthony. No persuasion could convince him to return home when his father came to attempt that move, and the Abbot, recognizing that his firmness was of divine origin, said to the monks, Let us not reject the gift of God. His father eventually was present when he received the tonsure, and shed It was soon visible to all that God destined him

for some high role in the Church.

He left for a more distant monastery in Auxerre, and there he seemed to live a life more angelic than human. A rich lord of the region, after talking with him one day, disposed of his entire fortune without even returning home, to embrace religious poverty.

At that time Saint Columban was preaching in Gaul; Valery with some fellow monks desired to hear him and went to Luxeuil, where they were not disappointed. They asked to be received into that monastery in 594 and were accepted. A corner of the garden which Valery was assigned to cultivate was entirely spared when insects devastated the rest. The holy Abbot Columban allowed him to make his religious profession, and he remained at Luxeuil for some fifteen years. He was a witness when the local king drove away Saint Columban from his foundation, as a foreigner in the land. Soon afterward the monastery was invaded by strangers, but finally Saint Valery and the new Abbot, Saint Eustasius, succeeded in recovering it.

Some time afterwards Saint Valery with another monk left to carry the faith elsewhere, and decided with the permission of King Clotaire to remain as hermits in the region of Amiens. He raised to life a poor condemned man after he had been hanged, and the word of the sanctity of this monk soon spread. The wilderness of Leuconaus was transformed into a community, where from the numerous monastic cells and church the praises of the Lord rose up night and day. In 613, three years after his arrival, this locality became a monastery where the religious lived in common.

A man who had become unable to walk was cured by Saint Valery and replaced him later as Abbot of this monastery; he is today Saint Blitmond. Many more miracles illustrated his life of prayer and sacrifice. Saint Valery died in 619, and his tomb became celebrated by numerous miracles. A basilica was raised there in his honor, at the site where one of his disciples had felled a tree, object of pagan superstitions, at a word from the Saint.

Excerpted from *Les Petits Bollandistes: Vies des Saints*, by Msgr. Paul Guérin

St. Finian, or Finan, Bishop of Cluain-Irard, or Clonard

Among the primitive teachers of the Irish church the name of St. Finian is one of the most famous next to that of St. Patrick. He was a native of Leinster, was instructed in the elements of Christian virtue by the



disciples of St. Patrick, and out of an ardent desire of making greater progress passed over into Wales, where he conversed with St. David, St. Gildas, and St. Cathmael, three eminent British saints.

After having remained thirty years in Britain, about the year 520 he returned into Ireland, excellently qualified by sanctity and sacred learning to restore the spirit of religion among his countrymen, which had begun to decay. Like a loud trumpet sounding from heaven, he roused the sloth and insensibility of the lukewarm and softened the hearts that were most hardened, and had been long immersed in worldly business and pleasure.



To propagate the work of God, St. Finian established several monasteries and schools; the chief of which was Clonard, in Meath, which was the saint's principal residence. Out of his school came several of the principal saints and doctors of Ireland, as Kiaran the Younger, Columkille, Columba, the son of Crimthain, the two Brendans, Laserian, Canicus or Kenny, Ruadan, and others. St. Finian was chosen and consecrated bishop of Clonard. The great monastery which he erected at Clonard was a famous seminary of sacred learning.

St. Finian, in the love of his flock, and his zeal for their salvation, equalled the Basils and the Chrysostoms, was infirm with the infirm, and wept with those who wept. He healed the souls, and often also the bodies of those who applied to him. His food was bread and herbs, his drink water, and his bed the ground, with a stone for his pillow. He departed to our Lord on the 12th of December, in 552, according to the *Inisfallen Annals*, quoted by Usher, but according to others in 564.

Excerpted from *Bultler's Lives of the Saints*

Daily Readings for: December 12, 2020 (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: O God, Father of mercies, who placed your people under the singular protection of your Son's most holy Mother, grant that all who invoke the Blessed Virgin of Guadalupe, may seek with ever more lively faith the progress of peoples

in the ways of justice and of peace. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Beef Broth](#)
- [Flan](#)
- [Mexican Bread Pudding](#)
- [Mole Poblano](#)
- [Rose Petal Pound Cake](#)
- [Sopa de espinaca con codito](#)
- [Tacos](#)

ACTIVITIES

- [Celebrating for the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe](#)
- [Celebrating the Feasts of the Blessed Virgin](#)
- [Enthronement of Our Lady of Guadalupe](#)
- [Marian Hymn: 'Tis Said of Our Dear Lady](#)
- [Marian Hymn: Ave Maria Dear](#)
- [Marian Hymn: Beautiful, Glorious](#)
- [Marian Hymn: Salve Regina](#)
- [Marian Hymn: Stella Matutina](#)
- [Marian Hymn: Virgin Blessed, Thou Star the Fairest](#)
- [Mary Garden](#)
- [Party for the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe](#)

PRAYERS

- [Advent Wreath Prayers I](#)

- Advent Wreath Prayers II
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent (2nd Plan)
- Novena in Honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe
- Novena to Our Lady of Guadalupe for the Unborn
- Christmas Anticipation Prayer
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent (1st Plan)

LIBRARY

- Marian Apparitions: Some Lessons From History | Donal Anthony Foley
- Our Lady of Guadalupe | Zsolt Aradi

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-12>

Advent: December 13th

Third Sunday of Advent

Old Calendar: Third Sunday of Advent; Gaudete Sunday

“Rejoice: the Lord is nigh.” As Christmas draws near, the Church emphasizes the joy which should be in our hearts over all that the birth of our Savior means for us. The great joy of Christians is to see the day drawing nigh when the Lord will come again in His glory to lead them into His kingdom. The oft-repeated Veni (“Come”) of Advent is an echo not only of the prophets but also of the conclusion of the Apocalypse of St. John: “Come, Lord Jesus,” the last words of the New Testament.



Today is known as Gaudete Sunday. The term Gaudete refers to the first word of the Entrance Antiphon, “Rejoice”. Rose vestments are worn to emphasize our joy that Christmas is near, and we also light the rose candle on our Advent wreath.



Jesse Tree ~ Jonah

Christ Even Now on the Way to Bethlehem

Evidently, in the mind of holy Church, neither the prophecy concerning Bethlehem Ephrata nor its fulfillment in the day of Caesar Augustus is to be considered merely a glorious divine disposition and achievement. No, the prophecy of Micheus is still being verified every day, but predominantly during the annual Advent season; for the selfsame incarnate eternal Son of God who journeyed to Bethlehem to be born there physically, now to the end of time comes to human souls as to spiritual Bethlehems, there to be born

anew, again and again.

But be sure to picture these merciful spiritual journeyings of Christ to the Bethlehem of souls as all too often sadly realistic spiritual repetitions of His first long journey over the rugged road from Nazareth to Bethlehem. Meditate long on the wanton and malicious opposition He encounters on His way to them from souls that leave their senses and heart and mind to be ruled by earthly vanities, and their whole selves to be willing victims of the sensual and selfish illusions and witcheries of the seven capital vices.

Can you still fail to see why Isaias and the Baptist compare the hardships of the way of the world's Messiah-King to souls with a rough, crooked, and almost impassable road up steep hills and down precipitous valleys and through dangerous mountain passes? Do you wonder that these prophets of His coming insist so strongly that merely sentimental longings and routine prayers, however multiplied, cannot prepare us worthily for the entrance He must expect and the welcome He craves?

Pray very honestly, therefore, that you may begin to see the practical reasons for the Church's crying out in the desert world, and even into your own interior soul and heart:

“Prepare ye the way of the Lord: Make straight in the wilderness His paths; Every valley shall be exalted; Every mountain and hill shall be made low; And the crooked shall be made straight; And the rough ways plain” (Is. 40:3, 4). Then shall you see the salvation of God!

Excerpted from *Our Way to the Father* by Rev. Leo M. Krenz, S.J.

Commentary for the Readings in the Extraordinary Form: Third Sunday of Advent “I (John) am the voice of one crying in the desert,...but (pointing to Christ) in the midst of you there has stood One Whom you do not know” (Gospel).



This is known as “Rejoice” Sunday, from the opening word of the Introit. Despite our self-praised progress, real joy is missing from modern life. In such a “desert” we must look to Christ. Only He can “bring light to the darkness of our minds” (Prayer).

Only He can bless, deliver and forgive (Offertory). Only He can “say to the faint-hearted, ‘Take courage’” (Communion Verse).

During these days before Christmas “have no anxiety” about selecting or receiving mere tinsel gifts, but prepare “in...prayer...with thanksgiving” and “guard...your minds in Christ,” the true source of our joy (Epistle).

Excerpted from *My Sunday Missal*, Confraternity of the Precious Blood

Daily Readings for: [December 13, 2020](#) ([Readings on USCCB website](#))

Collect: O God, who see how your people faithfully await the feast of the Lord’s Nativity, enable us, we pray, to attain the joys of so great a salvation and to celebrate them always with solemn worship and glad rejoicing. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Beef Broth](#)
- [Flan](#)
- [Hazelnut Macaroons](#)
- [Jesse Tree Cookies](#)
- [Mole Poblano](#)
- [Rose Petal Pound Cake](#)
- [Sopa de espinaca con codito](#)
- [Springerle III](#)
- [Tacos](#)

ACTIVITIES

- Posters for Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany
- Spiritual Crib

PRAYERS

- Advent Prayers
- Jesse Tree Prayer Service
- Advent Table Blessing 1
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent (1st Plan)

LIBRARY

- John the Baptist, an Enduring Model of Fidelity to God | Pope Saint John Paul II
- Rejoice, the Lord Is Near | Pope Saint John Paul II
- Take Courage, for the Lord Is Near! | Pope Saint John Paul II
- The Joy of Advent | Pope Benedict XVI
- We Are to Celebrate Joy So That the Liturgy Mirrors the Abundance of Good Things Provided by God | Cardinal Peter Kodwo Appiah Turkson

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-13>

Advent: December 14th

Memorial of St. John of the Cross, priest and doctor

St. John of the Cross (1542-1591) was born and died in Spain. His parents were poor and could not give him training in any trade. Hence he became the servant of the sick in the hospital of Medina. In 1563 he offered himself as a lay brother to the Carmelite friars, who, however, perceiving his unusual talents, had him ordained a priest. When he was about to join the more severe Order of the Carthusians, the saintly Teresa persuaded him to remain and help her in the reform of the Carmelite Order. This reform of his order caused him such sufferings and brought him many trials. But his sufferings served only to detach him from creatures. He had a great devotion to Our Lord's Passion and voluntarily sought out humiliations. When Our Lord asked him what reward he would ask for his labors, John answered: "To suffer and to be despised for Thee." He died of a cruel disease, embracing the crucifix. Because of his profound treatises on mystical theology Pope Pius XI proclaimed him Doctor of the Church. According to the 1962 Missal of St. John XXIII the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite St. John of Cross' feast is celebrated on November 24.



Jesse Tree ~ Judith

St. John of the Cross

Juan de Yepes was the Castilian son of a poor silk weaver of Fontiberos, Toledo, Spain and was born in 1542. His father was of noble birth; he had married much beneath him, and for that offense had been



entirely cut off by his family. He had taken to silk weaving as a means of livelihood, but had never been able to make much of it. Soon after the birth of Juan he died, worn out with the effort to keep his wife and three children. The family was left in direst poverty; the children grew up always underfed, so that to the end of his life Juan remained dwarfed in stature.



Unable to learn a trade, he became the servant of the poor in the hospital of Medina, while still pursuing his sacred studies. In 1563, being then twenty-one, he humbly offered himself as a lay-brother to the Carmelite friars, who, however, knowing his talents, had him ordained priest. He would now have exchanged to the severe Carthusian Order, had not St. Teresa of Avila, with the instinct of a saint, persuaded him to remain and help her in the reform of his own Order.

Thus he became the first prior of the Discalced (meaning “barefoot”) Carmelites. His reform, though approved by the general, was rejected by the elder friars, who condemned the saint as a fugitive and apostate, and cast him into prison, whence he only escaped, after nine months’ suffering, at the risk of his life. Twice again, before his death, he was shamefully persecuted by his brethren, and publicly disgraced. But his complete abandonment by creatures only deepened his interior peace and devout longing for heaven.

St. John was a great contemplative and spiritual writer. He was proclaimed Doctor of the Church by Pope Pius XI on August 24, 1926. He is the patron of contemplative life, mystical theology, mystics, and Spanish poets.

Excerpted from *Little Pictorial Lives of the Saints* © 1878 and *Saints for Sinners* by Alban Goodier, S.J.

“With what procrastinations do you wait, since from this very moment you can love God in your heart?”

Excerpted from *Prayer of a Soul Taken with Love* — St. John of the Cross

Mine are the heavens and mine is the earth. Mine are the nations, the just are mine and mine the sinners. The angels are mine, and the Mother of God, and all things are mine;

and God himself is mine and for me, because Christ is mine and all for me. What do you ask, then, and seek my soul? Yours is all of this, and all is for you. Do not engage yourself in something less or pay heed to the crumbs that fall from your Father's table. Go forth and exult in your Glory! Hide yourself in it and rejoice, and you will obtain the supplications of your heart.

Excerpted from *Sayings of Light and Love*, 26-27 — St. John of the Cross

Patron: Contemplative life; contemplatives; mystical theology; mystics; Spanish poets

Things to Do:

- See [Celebrating the Feast of St. John of the Cross](#) for ideas.
- Read more about [St. John of the Cross](#) at the ICS website.
- Three of his works, *Ascent of Mount Carmel*, *Dark Night of the Soul* and *Spiritual Canticle of the Soul and the Bridegroom Christ* are available online at the [Christian Classics Ethereal Library](#).

Daily Readings for: December 14, 2020 (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: O God, who gave the Priest Saint John an outstanding dedication to perfect self-denial and love of the Cross, grant that, by imitating him closely at all times, we may come to contemplate eternally your glory. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Carmelite Sundaes](#)
- [Gazpacho III](#)
- [Oatmeal Carmelite Bars](#)

ACTIVITIES

- Celebrating for the Feast of St. John of the Cross
- Namedays
- What is a Nameday?

PRAYERS

- Advent Wreath Prayers I
- Advent Wreath Prayers II
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent (2nd Plan)
- Christmas Anticipation Prayer
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent (1st Plan)
- Litany of Saint John of the Cross

LIBRARY

- Demons According to St. Teresa and St. John of the Cross | Fr. Antonio Moreno O.P.
- Saint John of the Cross | Pope Benedict XVI

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-14>

Advent: December 15th

Tuesday of the Third Week of Advent; St. Virginia Centurione Bracelli (Italy)

Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the most High; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father; and he shall reign in the house of Jacob for ever. And of his kingdom there shall be no end. And Mary said to the angel: How shall this be done, because I know not man? And the angel answering, said to her: The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. (Luke 1:31-35).



Today the feast of St. Virginia Bracelli is celebrated in Italy. She was born in 1587 and entered into an arranged marriage in 1602. She bore two daughters and was widowed in 1607 aged 20. She refused another marriage and took up a vow of chastity. She devoted the rest of her life to helping the needy and the sick and died in 1651 aged 64. She was canonized by Pope John Paul II on May 18, 2003.



Jesse Tree ~ the Annunciation

The Three Feasts of the Nativity

When we celebrate Christmas we are commemorating the three nativities of Our Lord Jesus Christ. This is the reason for the three Masses celebrated on this day. The first is the eternal begetting of God the Son from all eternity within the mystery of the Blessed Trinity by the Father, “You are My Son. Today I have begotten You.” This first nativity was before the seven days of Creation, when everything was darkness. This is why the

first Mass is at midnight to recall the darkness that prevailed during that first eternal birth of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity.

The second nativity, or birth, of the Second Person of the Trinity is commemorated on Christmas day when He became man, born of the Virgin Mary, in Bethlehem. For the world, the darkness was beginning to be dispelled. This is why the second Mass is celebrated at dawn when the dawn is beginning to dispel the darkness.

The third nativity of Christ is when He is born in our souls, through His in-dwelling, when man, through grace, becomes enlightened. Thus the third Mass is celebrated during the day when the sun is bright. For man is truly enlightened when he has Christ in his soul.

The first nativity reminds us of the Spirit of poverty, the Spirit that tells us that all the things God created is His, to be used for His glory and not for man's enjoyment. Even man was to use himself for the glory of God. This represents the six days of creation. If Adam, being the head of creation, had observed the spirit of poverty and used all of creation for the glory of God, then he would have entered into the Sabbath, God's rest... i.e. eternal happiness. But Adam messed up everything. And the consequence: the whole of mankind could not enter God's rest.

The second nativity reminds us of the Spirit of chastity. That Spirit reminds us to give up all physical comforts, pleasure and conveniences. And Christ in the manger is a clear example of this. It is a continuous reminder that true happiness can only be found in God and that we are on earth to seek God. All the rest will come with that find. True rest can only be found in God.

The third nativity reminds us of the Spirit of obedience. It is only when we can say, "Not my will but Your will be done," can Christ be born in our souls. The apostolic commission at the end of St. Matthew's Gospel reiterates this, reminding us of the role of the Church and the men of the Church: "... teach all My commands and how to observe them."

Christmas reminds us of one lesson. Christ was born to die. For us the message is clear. We are born to die to oneself. And to die to oneself means reaching a point in our lives when we no longer do our own will but the will of the Father in heaven. This is to lose one's life in order to find it. If we have learned the lessons of the first nativity, if we have learned the lesson of the second nativity, our reward is the third nativity, when Christ is born in our souls....indeed our eternal Christmas. This is truly a Merry Christmas.

— Excerpted from Fr. Odon de Castro, Bo. San Isidro, Magalang, Pampanga, Philippines

St. Virginia Centurione Bracelli

Daughter of Giorgio Centurione, and imposing and controlling individual who became the Doge of Genoa, and Lelia Spinola. Raised in a pious family, she felt drawn to religious life as a child. However, due to family position she agree to an arranged marriage to Gasparo Grimaldi Bracelli on 10 December 1602. He was a drinker, a gambler, and though the couple had two daughters, Lelia and Isabella, he was little of a father or husband. Virginia was widowed on 13 June 1607 after five years of marriage, aged 20, and with two small children.



Virginia moved in with her in-laws, cared for her children, and dedicated her free time to prayer and charity. When her daughters were grown and married, Virginia devoted herself entirely to caring for the sick, aged, and abandoned children. In late 1624 and early 1625 war in the region led to many orphans, some whom Virginia took in and cared for, and she worked with refugees in the town. When her mother-in-law died in August 1625, Virginia poured herself into the work, turning her house into a refuge and founding the Cento Signore della Misericordia Protettrici dei Poveri di Gesù Cristo.

Her house was overrun with the needy during a plague and famine in 1629 – 1630. To house them all Virginia rented the vacant convent of Monte Calvario and moved her charges there in 1631. Due to crowding, extra housing was built in 1634, Virginia was soon caring for 300 patients, and in 1635 she received official government recognition for her hospital. Virginia worked closely with the young women in her houses, teaching them religion and ways to earn a living.

The expenses of Monte Calvario were excessive, so Virginia bought two villas and started construction of a church dedicated to Our Lady of Refuge. It became the mother church of the Institution, whose Rule was written between 1644 and 1650 and which was divided into two congregations: Suore di Nostra Signora del Rifugio di Monte Calvario (Sisters of Our Lady of Refuge in Mount Calvary) and Figlie di Nostra Signora al Monte Calvario (Daughters of Our Lady on Mount Calvary). When the group of Protectors, the superiors and governors of the Institute was selected in 1641, Virginia retired from

administration, working as the humblest sister, doing chores on the grounds and begging for alms for the Institute.

Sadly, though the Institute was a success, healing the sick, educating children, training adults, and helping the dissolute return to productive lives, assistance, personal and financial, began to decline. Without the chance to work with Virginia, many of the middle and upper class did not participate, fearing the poor and rough residents. Though her health was failing, Virginia returned to active administrative duties. She worked for general spiritual development throughout the region, working for the choice of the Blessed Virgin Mary as patron of the republic of Genoa in 1637, for the institution of the Forty Hours' Devotion in 1642, and the revival of home missions in 1643. She acted as peacemaker between noble houses, and aided in the reconciliation of Church and Republic authorities in 1647, ending a dispute caused by the government abandoning support of the Institute. Virginia continued working up to the end of her days, and in later years received the gifts of visions and interior locutions.

Excerpted from Saints.SQPN.com

Daily Readings for: December 15, 2020 **(Readings on USCCB website)**

Collect: O God, who through your Only Begotten Son have made us a new creation, look kindly, we pray, on the handiwork of your mercy, and at your Son's coming cleanse us from every stain of the old way of life. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Luscious Coffee Ring](#)

ACTIVITIES

- [Christmas Field Trip](#)

- [Gifts for Jesus, the Advent Manger](#)
- [Preparing the Christmas Gifts](#)
- [Religion in the Home for Elementary School: December](#)
- [Religion in the Home for Preschool: December](#)

PRAYERS

- [Advent Wreath Prayers I](#)
- [Advent Wreath Prayers II](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent \(2nd Plan\)](#)
- [December Devotion: The Immaculate Conception](#)
- [Christmas Anticipation Prayer](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent \(1st Plan\)](#)

LIBRARY

- [The Mystery of Man's Reconciliation with God | St. Leo the Great](#)

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-15>

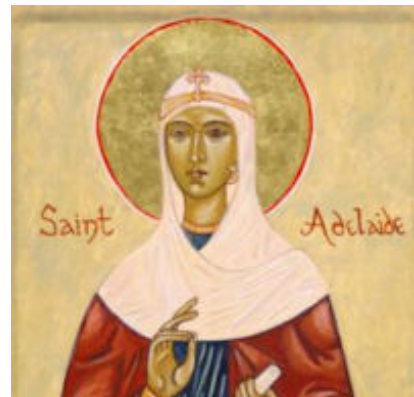
Advent: December 16th

Wednesday of the Third Week of Advent

Old Calendar: St. Eusebius, bishop and martyr; St. Adelaide, queen of Italy (Hist)

We are the blind offspring of the children of pitiful Eve
Bringing with us the shadows born of an age-old error.
But when God deigned to assume the mortal form Of a
human nature, then came forth from the Virgin A world
of salvation.... —*Carmen 4, Sedulius*

According to the 1962 Missal of St. John XXIII the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite, today is the feast of St. Eusebius which is celebrated in the Ordinary Form of the Roman Rite on [August 2](#). Historically it is also the feast of St. Adelaide, daughter of the king of Burgundy. Throughout her life, she received strong support from the abbots of Cluny, with whom she was on terms of close friendship.



Jesse Tree ~ John the Baptist

St. Adelaide

St. Adelaide was a truly remarkable woman. She was the daughter of the king of Burgundy, and was married to the son of the ruler of Provence as a means of ending a feud. When her husband was murdered by a rival prince, she was shut up in captivity until freed by Otto I, who became Holy Roman Emperor and Adelaide, his Empress. She ruled with her husband until his death, at which time her jealous daughter-in-law had her banished from the court twice! Yet she remained steadfast and faithful, known for her liberality in giving and her piety; and eventually she was restored to court as the regent for her grandson Otto III. She was active in the reforms of the great abbey at Cluny, and

reposed in 999. Despite her exalted status, she was a wife and mother, and lived both hard times and good, always faithful to her Lord, and always ready to give generously to those in need. She never took revenge on her political enemies once she gained the regency and it was said that her court was much like a monastery itself in its piety. She is a reminder to me that regardless of how much or how little I may have, my work remains the same.

Excerpted from Panagia Icons

Patron:

Things to Do:

- Read more about St. Adelaide [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).



Today is [Day One](#) of the Christmas Novena

Daily Readings for: [December 16, 2020](#)
([Readings on USCCB website](#))

Collect: Grant, we pray, almighty God, that the coming solemnity of your Son may bestow healing upon us in this present life and bring us the rewards of life eternal. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Chiresaye \(Cherry Pudding Decorated with Flowers\)](#)

ACTIVITIES

- Advent and the Year of the Eucharist
- Christmas Plays, Los Pastores and Las Posadas
- Las Posadas II
- O Antiphon Days
- Posters for Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany

PRAYERS

- Advent Wreath Prayers I
- Christmas Novena including the O Antiphons
- Advent Wreath Prayers II
- Novena to the Infant Jesus
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent (2nd Plan)
- Christmas Novena - December 16 - 24
- Christmas Anticipation Prayer
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent (1st Plan)

LIBRARY

- None

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

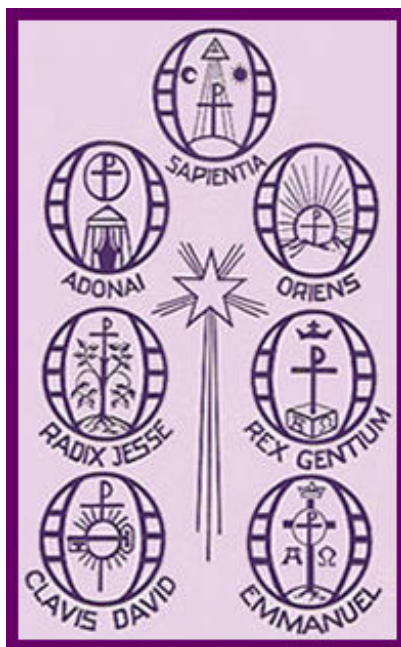
<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-16>

Advent: December 17th

Thursday of the Third Week of Advent; St. Jose Manyanet, priest

Old Calendar: St. Lazarus of Bethany

December 17 marks the beginning of the O Antiphons, the seven jewels of our liturgy, dating back to the fourth century, one for each day until Christmas Eve. These antiphons address Christ with seven magnificent Messianic titles, based on the Old Testament prophecies and types of Christ. The Church recalls the



variety of the ills of man before the coming of the Redeemer. See [O Come! The O Antiphons](#) and [Rejoice the Lord is Near!](#) for more information on the O Antiphons by Jennifer Gregory Miller. Build an [O Antiphon House](#) with the instructions found here.

Today is the feast of Josep Manyanet y Vives who was born to a large and pious family. He was dedicated to Our Lady at age 5 by his mother. Educated by the Piarist Fathers in Barbastro, Spain, and then in seminaries at Lleida and Urgell in Spain. He founded the Congregation of the Sons of the Holy Family in 1864 and the Missionary Daughters of the Holy Family of Nazareth in 1874. Both were dedicated to serving the Christian family, teaching, and parish ministry. He wrote books and pamphlets encouraging devotion to the Holy Family, to help the spiritual formation of the members of his congregations, to help families in trouble, and about school management. He also

founded the magazine *La Sagrada Familia*.

Today, according to the *Roman Martyrology*, is the feast of St Lazarus known as the brother of St Martha and St Mary of Bethany. He was the man whom Jesus raised from the dead after having been dead and in his tomb for four days. The Bible does not trace his history after the miracle, but tradition says he became a missionary to Gaul, the first bishop of Marseilles, France, and a martyr in the persecutions of Domitian.

Those using the Jesse Tree should continue from today until Christmas by using symbols based on the “O” antiphons (see [Jesse Tree Instructions](#)).



O Wisdom

Divine Wisdom clothes itself in the nature of a man. It conceals itself in the weakness of a child. It chooses for itself infancy, poverty, obedience, subjection, obscurity. “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and the prudence of the prudent I will reject... Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For seeing that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God, by the foolishness of our preaching, to save them that believe. For both the Jews require signs, and the Greeks seek after wisdom; but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews, indeed, a stumbling block, and unto the Gentiles foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God and the wisdom of God... But the foolish things of the world hath God chosen, that He may confound the wise; and the weak things of the world hath God chosen, that He may confound the strong. And the base things of the world and the things that are contemptible, hath God chosen, and the things that are not, that He might bring to naught the things that are” (I Cor. 1:19 ff.).

- Come, O divine Wisdom, teach us the way of knowledge. We are unwise; we judge and speak according to the vain standards of the world, which is foolishness in the eyes of God.
- Come, O divine Wisdom, give us the true knowledge and the taste for what is eternal and divine. Inspire us with a thirst for God’s holy will, help us seek God’s guidance and direction, enlighten us in the teachings of the holy gospel, make us submissive to Thy holy Church. Strengthen us in the forgetfulness of

self, and help us to resign ourselves to a position of obscurity if that be Thy holy will. Detach our hearts from resurgent pride. Give us wisdom that we may understand that “but one thing is necessary” (Luke 10:42). “For what doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world and suffer the loss of his own soul?” (Matt. 16:26.) The Holy Spirit would have us know that one degree of grace is worth more than all worldly possessions.



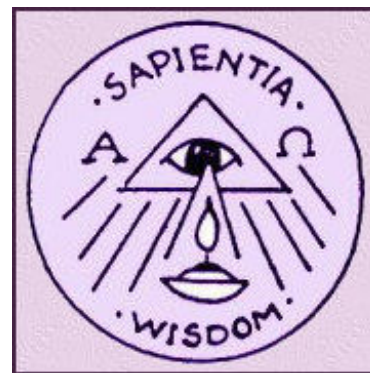
Excerpted from *The Light of the World* by Benedict Baur, O.S.B.

1st O Antiphon:

Symbols: All-Seeing Eye and the Lamp

Come, and teach us the way of prudence.

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



O Sapientia, quae ex ore Altissimi prodiisti, attingens a fine usque ad finem fortiter, suaviterque disponens omnia: veni ad docendum nos viam prudentiae.

The “all-seeing eye” represents the all-knowing and ever-present God. During the late Renaissance, the eye was pictured in a triangle with rays of light to represent the infinite holiness of the Trinity. The lamp is a symbol of wisdom taken from the parable of the wise and foolish virgins in Matthew 25.

Recommended Readings: *Proverbs* 8:1-12



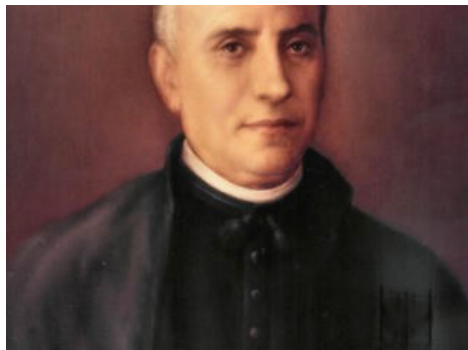
Today is **Day Two** of the Christmas Novena.

St. Josep Manyanet y Vives

Josep Manyanet was born within a large and Christian family on January 7, 1833 in Northeastern Spain, in the city of Tremp, province



of Lleida. He was baptized on the same day at his parish Church of our Lady of Valldeflors, patroness of the city. At a very early age, when he was five years old, he was offered to our Lady by his mother. He had to work to complete his schooling with the Piarist Fathers in Barbastro and at the Seminaries of Lleida and Urgell. He was ordained priest on April 9, 1859.



After twelve years of hard work in the Diocese of Urgell at the service of his bishop as private secretary, librarian of the seminary, administrator of the chancery and secretary for pastoral Visitations, he felt God's call to become a religious priest and to found two religious congregations.

Founder and Apostle of the Holy Family

With the approval of his bishop, he founded, in 1864, the religious congregations of the Sons of the Holy Family Jesus, Mary and Joseph and, in 1874, the Missionary Daughters of the Holy Family of Nazareth with the mission to honor, imitate and propagate the example of the Holy Family of Nazareth and the Christian formation of families, especially through the catholic education of children and youth and through priestly ministry.

With constant work and prayer, with an exemplary life full of virtues, with loving dedication and solicitude for the souls, he guided and encouraged for almost forty years, the formation and expansion of his Institutes, opening schools and centers of ministry in several towns in Spain. Today both Institutes are present in several European countries, in North and South America and in Africa as well.

Specially called by God to present to the world the example of the Holy Family of Nazareth, he wrote several books and booklets to spread the devotion of the Holy Family. He founded the magazine *La Sagrada Familia* and promoted the idea of the construction of a Temple dedicated to the Holy Family. The Temple, as yet unfinished in Barcelona, was built by the architectural genius and Servant of God Antonio Gaudí, destined to perpetuate the virtues and examples of the Family of Nazareth and to be the universal spiritual home of all families.

His Train of Thought

Blessed Josep Manyanet endeavored to spread the Gospel, both through his preaching and his writings. He wrote many letters, books and booklets for the formation of the

members of his religious Institutes, for families and children and for the management of schools. One of the highlights is the *School of Nazareth* and *Home of the Holy Family* (Barcelona 1895), his spiritual autobiography in which through the dialogues of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, with a literary character called Desideria, describes a process of Christian and religious perfection inspired in the spirituality of the home and school of Nazareth.

His book *A Priceless Family Gem* (Barcelona 1899) is a guide for marriages and families, which reminds them of the dignity of the sacrament of marriage as a vocation and the important task of the Christian education of their children.

The *Spirit of the Holy Family* is a book of meditations dedicated to the members of his religious Institutes, where he describes their vocation, identity and mission within the society and the church. There is an edition of his *Selected Works* (Madrid 1991). A forthcoming edition of his Complete Works will enrich those already published. The first volume is already on the way.

Illnesses and Death

His many endeavors were not free of difficulties. He also had to endure physical illnesses along his life, but his constancy and fortitude, nourished by his humble obedience to the will of God, helped him to overcome all of them.

Because of his poor health, due to open sores on his side, which he labelled God's mercies for 16 long years, on the 17th of December of 1901, full of virtues and good deeds, was called by God to his eternal home, in his school "Jesús, María y José" of Barcelona, central place of his work, surrounded by children, with the same simplicity that characterized all his life. His last words were his fervent prayer Jesus, Mary and Joseph, may I breathe forth my soul in peace with you.

His remains are kept in a burial chapel at the same school where he died, accompanied by the prayer and gratitude of his religious sons and daughters as well as the numerous youth, children and families that, because of his example, live their lives close to God and to his teachings.

Witness to Holiness

His saintly life impressed many people who came in contact with him. The Process of Canonization was formally introduced in 1956. Once the practice of all virtues in a heroic grade was officially recognized by the church in 1982 and proof of a healing miracle attributed to his intercession, Pope John Paul II declared him Blessed in 1984. After the approval of a second miracle through his intercession, Josep was canonized in

Rome, on May 16, 2004.

Pope John Paul II has stated that the sanctity demonstrated by Josep Manyet stems from the Holy Family. He was called by God, so that “in his name every family on earth may be blessed”. The Holy spirit guided him to boldly proclaim the “Gospel of the family”. His inspiration was that “all families may imitate and bless the Holy Family of Nazareth”. That is: “to build a Nazareth in every home”, and to make of every family a “Holy Family”.

His canonization brings forth the truth of his sanctity and the unending value of his message from Nazareth. That makes him a Prophet of the family and the protector of our families.

Excerpted from the Vatican website

Things to Do:

- Read this [biography](#) of St. Josep’s life.
- Read about the [Sons of the Holy Family](#) which St. Josep founded.
- Consider joining the [Holy Family Association](#) in which the laity participate in St. Josep’s order.
- If you understand Spanish you can watch this [life of St. Joseph](#) on YouTube.

St. Lazarus of Bethany

The Righteous St Lazarus, the brother of Martha and Mary (Magdalene), lived in the village of Bethany, not far from Jerusalem. During His earthly life the Lord Jesus Christ often visited the house of Lazarus, whom He much loved and called His friend (John 11:3,11), and when Lazarus had died and lain four days already in the grave, the Lord raised him from the dead (John 11:1-44). (The Church remembers St Lazarus on the Saturday of the Sixth Week of Great Lent, “Lazarus Saturday.”) Many of the Jews, when they heard about this, came to Bethany. Being persuaded of the reality of this most remarkable wonder, they became followers of Christ. Because of this the High Priests also wanted to kill Lazarus. Righteous Lazarus is mentioned in the Holy Gospel once more: when the Lord had come again to Bethany six days before the Passover, Lazarus was also there (John 12:1-2, 12:9-11). After his raising, St Lazarus lived another thirty years as a bishop on the island of Cyprus, where he spread Christianity and peacefully fell asleep in the Lord. The holy relics of St Lazarus were discovered in Kiteia. They were within a marble coffin, upon which was inscribed: “Lazarus of the Four-Days, the friend of Christ.” The Byzantine emperor Leo the Wise (886-911) gave orders to transfer the relics of St Lazarus to



Constantinople in the year 898 and place them within the church of the Righteous Lazarus.

The story of Lazarus is a preview of Jesus' approaching death and resurrection. Lazarus stands for the fallen humanity about to be raised from the death of sin to life in God through Christ's passion, death, and resurrection. The illness which Jesus allows Lazarus to undergo is the symbol of our false self with all its weakness, ignorance, and pride, together with all the damage lying in the unconscious from earliest childhood to the present moment. To raise Lazarus from this illness to life in the Spirit is the most profound meaning of the event. Lazarus' resurrection manifests the full significance of Christ's resurrection, which restores sinful humanity, not only to the divine life, but to its super-abounding fullness.

Patron: Diocese of Autun, France and archdiocese of Marseille, France.

Things to do:

- Read this [account of St. Lazarus of Bethany](#) at the The Military and Hospitaller Order of St. Lazarus website.
- Read about [Bethany](#), where Jesus raised St. Lazarus from the dead.
- Read about the [Agios Lazaros Church](#) in Cyprus.
- Read about the [translation](#) of the relics of St. Lazarus.
- Read about St. Lazarus at the Greek Orthodox

Daily Readings for: December 17, 2020
(Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: O God, Creator and Redeemer of human nature, who willed that your Word should take flesh in an ever-virgin womb, look with favor on our prayers, that your Only Begotten Son, having taken to himself our humanity, may be pleased to grant us a share in his divinity. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- Jesse Tree Cookies

ACTIVITIES

- Advent House
- Advent Hymn: Veni, Veni, Emmanuel or O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
- Christmas Plays, Los Pastores and Las Posadas
- Jesse Tree Instructions
- Las Posadas II
- O Antiphon Days
- O Antiphon Tree Decorations
- O Antiphons - December 17 - 24

PRAYERS

- Advent Tower
- Advent Wreath Prayers I
- Christmas Novena including the O Antiphons
- Advent Wreath Prayers II
- Novena to the Infant Jesus
- O Antiphons
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent (2nd Plan)
- Christmas Anticipation Prayer
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent (1st Plan)
- Prayer to St. José Manyanet
- The O Antiphons Verses

LIBRARY

- [Now Is The Time For Conversion To Peace | Pope Saint John Paul II](#)
- [Waiting in Joyful Hope! | Bishop John C. Wester](#)

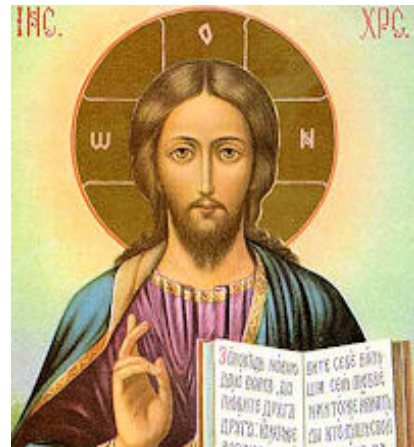
View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-17>

Advent: December 18th

Friday of the Third Week of Advent

Today is the second of the O Antiphons, *O Adonai* (O Almighty God). As Moses approached the burning bush, so we approach the divine Savior in the form of a child in the crib, or in the form of the consecrated host, and falling down we adore Him. “Put off the shoes from thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground ... I am who am.” “Come with an outstretched arm to redeem us.” This is the cry of the Church for the second coming of Christ on the last day. The return of



the Savior brings us plentiful redemption.

O Lord and Ruler

Thou art He “who didst appear to Moses in the burning bush.” “I have seen the affliction of My people in Egypt, and I have heard their cry because of the rigor of them that are over the works. And knowing their sorrow, I am come down to deliver them out of the hands of the Egyptians and to bring them out of that land into a good and spacious land, into a land that floweth with milk and honey” (Exod. 3:7 f.). Thus spoke the Lord to Moses from the bush which burned but was not consumed, which is a figure of God’s condescension to assume the weakness of human nature. The human nature of Christ is united to the burning divine nature, and yet it is not consumed.

As Moses approached the burning bush, so we approach the divine Savior in the form of a child in the crib, or in the form of the consecrated host, and falling down we adore Him. “Put off the shoes from thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground... I am who am” (Exod. 3:5, 14).

O Adonai, almighty God! Mighty in the weakness of a child, and in the helplessness of the Crucified! Thou, almighty God, mighty in the wonders that Thou hast worked! Mighty in guiding, sustaining, and developing Thy Church! “The gates of hell shall not

prevail against it” (Matt. 16:18).

“Come with an outstretched arm to redeem us.” This is the cry of the Church for the second coming of Christ on the last day. The return of the Savior brings us plentiful redemption. “Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess you the kingdom prepared for you” (Matt. 25-34).



Excerpted from *The Light of the World* by Benedict Baur, O.S.B.

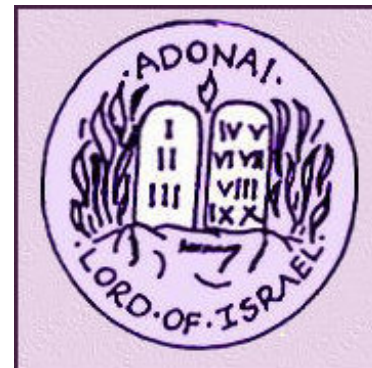
2nd O Antiphon:

Symbols: The Tablets

Come and redeem us with outstretched arm.

O Lord and Ruler of the House of Israel, who appeared to Moses in the flame of the burning bush and gave him the law on Sinai: Come and redeem us with outstretched arm.

O Adonai, et dux domus Israēl, qui Moyse in igne flammae rubi apparuisti, et ei in Sina legem dedisti: veni ad redimendum nos in brachio extento.



The tablets of stone are a picture of the Ten Commandments given by God to Moses on Mt. Sinai. They may be used to represent the whole of God’s law, the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible, the Torah), or the entire Old Testament.

Recommended Readings: *Micheas 5:1-9*



Today is **Day Three** of the Christmas Novena.

Daily Readings for: December 18, 2020
(Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: Grant, we pray, almighty God, that we, who are weighed down from of old by slavery beneath the yoke of sin, may be set free by the newness of the long-awaited Nativity of your Only Begotten Son. Who live and reigns with God the Father in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Rum Balls](#)

ACTIVITIES

- [Advent and the Year of the Eucharist](#)
- [Advent House](#)
- [Advent Hymn: Veni, Veni, Emmanuel or O Come, O Come, Emmanuel](#)
- [Christmas Plays, Los Pastores and Las Posadas](#)
- [Las Posadas II](#)
- [O Antiphon Days](#)
- [O Antiphon Tree Decorations](#)
- [O Antiphons - December 17 - 24](#)

PRAYERS

- [Advent Tower](#)
- [Advent Wreath Prayers I](#)
- [Christmas Novena including the O Antiphons](#)
- [Advent Wreath Prayers II](#)
- [Novena to the Infant Jesus](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent \(2nd Plan\)](#)
- [December Devotion: The Immaculate Conception](#)
- [Christmas Anticipation Prayer](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent \(1st Plan\)](#)

- [The O Antiphons Verses](#)

LIBRARY

- [What's in a name? | Dr. Michael P. Foley](#)

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-18>

Advent: December 19th

Saturday of the Third Week of Advent

Today is the third of the O Antiphons. Christ the King, the Lord! Divine Wisdom, Adonai, the powerful God, is at the same time man with flesh and blood of the house of Jesse, the father of King David. Truly, the right of kingship has now passed from the house of David. The glory that once clothed the royal family has faded and withered, leaving only a blighted and withered root. But from this root is to spring a glorious blossom, the King of the world. “He shall rule from sea to sea and from the river unto the ends of the earth. Before Him the Ethiopians shall fall down and His enemies shall lick the ground. The kings of Tharsis and the islands shall offer presents: the kings of the Arabians and of Saba shall serve Him” (Ps. 71:8-11). To Him God has said, “Thou art My Son... I will give Thee the Gentiles for Thy inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for Thy possession” (Ps. 2:7 f.).



O Root of Jesse

“Come to deliver us and tarry not.” The world cries out for Christ its King, who shall cast out the prince of this world (John 12:31). The prince of this world established his power over men as a result of original sin. Even after we had been delivered from the servitude of Satan through the death of Christ on the cross, the prince of this world attempts to exercise his power over us. “The devil, as a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour” (I Pet. 5:8). In these trying times, when faith in Christ and in God has largely disappeared, when the propaganda of a pagan culture is broadcast everywhere, and the forces of evil and falsehood rise up to cast God from His throne, who does not feel the power of the devil? Does it not appear that we are approaching that time when Satan will be released from the depths of hell to work his wonders and mislead, if possible, even the elect? (Apoc. 20:2; Matt. 24:24.)

“Come, tarry not.” Observe how thoroughly the world of today has submitted to the reign of Satan. Mankind has abandoned the search for what is good and holy. Loyalty, justice, freedom, love, and mutual trust are no longer highly regarded. Establish, O God, Thy kingdom among us, a kingdom established upon truth, justice, and peace. “Come, tarry not.” “Thy kingdom come.”

Excerpted from *The Light of the World* by Benedict Baur, O.S.B.

3rd O Antiphon:

Symbols: Plant with Flower

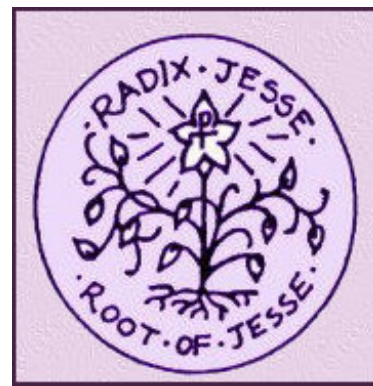
Come to deliver us, and tarry not.

O Root of Jesse, who stands for an ensign of the people, before whom kings shall keep silence and unto whom the Gentiles shall make supplication: Come to deliver us, and tarry not.

O Radix Jesse, qui stas in signum populorum, super quem continebunt reges os suum, quem gentes deprecabuntur: veni ad liberandum nos, jam noli tardare.

The flower which springs up from the root of Jesse is another figure of Christ. Isaiah prophesied that the Savior would be born from the root of Jesse, that He would sit upon the throne of David, and in Christ this prophecy is fulfilled.

Recommended Readings: *Isaias* 11:1-12



Today is **Day Four** of the Christmas Novena.

Daily Readings for: December 19, 2020
(Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: O God, who through the child-bearing of the holy Virgin graciously revealed the radiance of your glory to the world, grant, we pray, that we may

venerate with integrity of faith the mystery of so wondrous an Incarnation and always celebrate it with due reverence. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Sugar Cookies with Nuts](#)

ACTIVITIES

- [Advent Hymn: Veni, Veni, Emmanuel or O Come, O Come, Emmanuel](#)
- [Christmas Plays, Los Pastores and Las Posadas](#)
- [O Antiphon Days](#)
- [O Antiphon Tree Decorations](#)
- [O Antiphons - December 17 - 24](#)

PRAYERS

- [Advent Tower](#)
- [Advent Wreath Prayers I](#)
- [Christmas Novena including the O Antiphons](#)
- [Advent Wreath Prayers II](#)
- [Novena to the Infant Jesus](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent \(2nd Plan\)](#)
- [Christmas Anticipation Prayer](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent \(1st Plan\)](#)
- [The O Antiphons Verses](#)

LIBRARY

- [Now Is The Time For Conversion To Peace | Pope Saint John Paul II](#)

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-19>

Advent: December 20th

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Old Calendar: Fourth Sunday of Advent

“Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you.” But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.” Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”



The Fourth Sunday of Advent

The first reading is taken from 2 Samuel 7:1-5; 8-11;16 and refers to when David was anointed king in Hebron by all the tribes of Israel and Judah and his first step was to capture Jerusalem from the Jebusites and make it the political capital of his kingdom.

The second reading is from the Letter of St. Paul to the Romans 26:25-27 where he introduces himself to the Christians in Rome and he gives an incomplete synthesis of his theology. His words remind us to give glory to God this Christmas and always, for the marvelous things he has done for us.

The Gospel is from Luke 1:26-38. At the moment our Lady said: "be it done to me according to thy word" the most stupendous event that ever happened, or ever could happen on earth, took place on this planet of ours. The Son of God took on human nature in the womb of the Blessed Virgin. We are familiar with this story from childhood. We often say the Angelus in which this tremendous act of God's love is described. Although familiarity, in this case, does not breed contempt, it does help to blunt the real impact on our minds of such an extraordinary occurrence. If God had created a very special child,

and made him into an outstanding saint, so that he could intercede with God for us, this would be a great act of love for us on God's part. Or, if he had sent an angel from heaven in human form, to teach us all about God and to help us to lead holy lives, this would deserve our deepest gratitude. But neither a saintly man nor a holy angel could do for us all that God wanted. No man or angel could make us adopted sons of God and heirs of heaven. It was necessary, in God's plan for us, that his divine Son should become man, should share our humanity so that we could share his divinity.

Could infinite love have gone any further? Our creation, the fact that we exist as human beings on earth, is a great gift to us on the part of God. Of what value could eighty, a hundred, even seven hundred years of a continuously happy life on this earth be for us if we learned that we had to depart life forever one day? In a world tormented by sin and its evil effects our normal span of life would be less satisfying. However, when God created us, he so planned that our stay here would be but a stage, a stepping stone in fact, toward our everlasting home. We are well aware indeed of the lengths to which God's love has gone in order to make us his children and heirs to his kingdom. Are we, however, grateful to him for the love he has shown us? Are we honestly and sincerely trying to make ourselves worthy of the great future he has in store for us?

Today is a suitable occasion to look right into our hearts, to see how we stand with God. During the week we shall be keeping the feast of Christmas. The Baby in the manger will remind us of what God has done and is still doing for us. What are we doing in return? Have we shown our gratitude by living as true followers of Christ? If most of us must answer: "no," this is the time to change our course and return to the right road once more. God is asking this of us today. Shall our answer be: "behold here I am Lord, your humble and grateful servant, let it be done to me according to your word"?

Excerpted from *The Sunday Readings* by Fr. Kevin O'Sullivan, O.F.M.



O King of the Gentiles

"Come and save man, whom Thou hast made out of dust." What is man? He is but a particle of dust, an insignificant creature who has further separated himself from God through sin. He has been cut off from the fountain of truth and banished from God to darkness and misery. Still in the ruins there dwells a spirit that possesses a capacity for

truth. In these ashes there is yet a spark that may be fanned to life to burn with the brilliance of divine life. But only God can revive this flame. For this reason the Church cries out, “Come and save man, whom Thou hast made out of dust.” Save him who is so weak, so miserable and helpless. Remember his nothingness. Consider the many enemies who lay snares to rob him of divine life and to entice him into sin. Think of his obscured knowledge and his proneness to evil, of his tendency to error, and his weakness in the face of temptation. Guard him from the enticements of the world; shelter him from the poison of erroneous teaching; deliver him from the devil and his angels.

During these days before Christmas, the Church contemplates the overwhelming misery of unregenerated mankind. She cries out, “Come and save man, whom Thou hast made out of dust.”

Jesus is King of all nations. “The kings of the earth stood up and the princes met together against the Lord and against His Christ. Let us break their bonds asunder, and let us cast away their yoke from us. He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh at them, and the Lord shall deride them. Then shall He speak to them in His anger and trouble them in His rage. But I am appointed king by Him over Sion, His holy mountain. . . . The Lord hath said to Me; Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me and I will give Thee the Gentiles for Thy inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for Thy possession” (Ps. 2:2-8). Well may Herod seek the life of the newborn king. Indeed, many kings and tribes and nations in the course of time shall deprecate the divine King, Christ. But to Him has been given all power in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28: i8). Before Him every knee shall bend, and every tongue shall confess that He is the Lord (Phil. 2:10f.).

The more the mighty condemn the kingship of Christ, the more shall He be exalted by the Father.

Now He comes to us in the form of a lovely child. One day in the presence of the Roman governor He will assert His right to kingship. But after this one public confession of His royal origin He withdraws again into the obscurity which He had freely chosen. For the present He is satisfied with this manifestation of His royal dignity. The day will come, however, when He will manifest it with power and majesty as He comes again on the clouds of heaven. Before all nations God will declare: “I have anointed Him King of Sion. My holy mountain.” All men shall pay Him homage as king; all nations shall acclaim Him the King of Glory.



Excerpted from *The Light of the World* by Benedict Baur, O.S.B.

6th O Antiphon:

Symbols: Crown and Scepter

Come, and deliver man, whom You formed out of the dust of the earth.

O King of the Gentiles and their desired One, the Cornerstone that makes both one; Come, and deliver man, whom You formed out of the dust of the earth.

O Rex Gentium, et desideratus earum, lapisque angularis, qui facis utraque unum: veni, et salva hominem, quem de limo formasti.

The crown and scepter signify Christ's universal kingship. As we sing in the fifth O Antiphon, Christ is not only the King of the Jewish nation, but the "Desired One of all," the cornerstone which unites both Jew and Gentile.

Recommended Readings: *Apocalypse* 15:1-4



Today is **Day Five** of the Christmas Novena.

Commentary for the Readings in the Extraordinary Form: Fourth Sunday of Advent "John, the son of Zachary," to a world now awaiting its God, pleads for our final pre-Christmas "make ready." "Make ready the way of the Lord, make straight His paths" (Gospel).

Heroically, in the desert, he warns against the softness of life in the city, pictured in the background. Alive to the danger of a "soft garments" life, he is seen in a rough "garment of camel hair," carrying a baptismal shell, "preaching a baptism of repentance."



Excerpted from *My Sunday Missal*, Confraternity of the Precious Blood

Daily Readings for: December 20, 2020 (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: O God, eternal majesty, whose ineffable Word the immaculate Virgin received through the message of an Angel and so became the dwelling-place of divinity, filled with the light of the Holy Spirit, grant, we pray, that by her example we may in humility hold fast to your will. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [German Cinnamon Stars](#)

ACTIVITIES

- [Christmas Tree](#)
- [Posters for Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany](#)
- [Religion in the Home for Elementary School: December](#)
- [Religion in the Home for Preschool: December](#)

PRAYERS

- [Hungarian wheat](#)
- [Advent Prayers](#)
- [Jesse Tree Prayer Service](#)
- [Advent Table Blessing 1](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent \(1st Plan\)](#)

LIBRARY

- [Christ Was Born for Our Salvation | Pope Saint John Paul II](#)

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

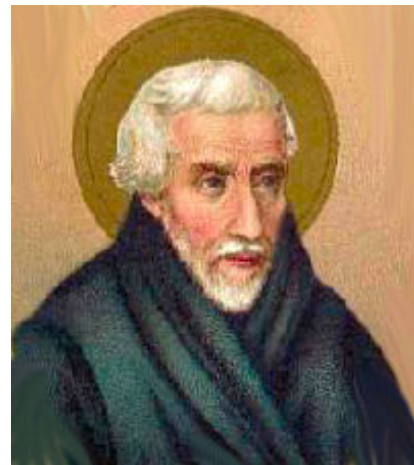
<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-20>

Advent: December 21st

Monday of the Fourth Week of Advent; Optional Memorial of St. Peter Canisius, priest and doctor

Old Calendar: St. Thomas, apostle

St. Peter Canisius (1521-1597) was born at Nijmegen, Holland, at the very time that Luther began to rebel against the Church and St. Ignatius Loyola was laying the foundations of the Jesuit Order. After studying the arts, civil law and theology, St. Peter joined the Jesuit Order and was ordained a priest in 1546. He is noted especially for the following services to the Church: he defended the Catholic faith against the Protestants; by preaching, writing, founding colleges and seminaries, he caused Catholic life to flourish; he rendered invaluable services to the ecumenical Council of Trent; he wrote many Catechisms which were translated into twelve languages in his own life time. He died in Fribourg, Switzerland.



According to the 1962 Missal of St. John XXIII the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite, today is the feast of St. Thomas the Apostle, now celebrated [July 3](#). Previously St. Peter Canisius' feast was celebrated on April 27.

Today is the fifth of the O Antiphons. It is the Sun, the Redeemer, whom we await. "I am the light [the sun] of the world" (John 8:12). Christ is the light of the world because of the faith which He has infused into souls. He has enlightened the world by His teaching and by the example of His life. In the crib, in Nazareth, on the cross on Calvary, in the tabernacle of our churches, He answers the eternal questioning of the benighted soul.



O Radiant Dawn

O eternal Sun, come and enlighten us, for where Thou art not, there is darkness, death, and wickedness. “Come and enlighten all who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.”

“But now [you are] light in the Lord” (Eph. 5:18). In the Church the light has now appeared to us on the first Christmas night, on the day of our baptism, daily in the Mass and at the time of Holy Communion, and in the many inspirations and promptings of grace. How thankful we should be for this light, which is Christ.

But we have yet to reach the full measure of the stature of Christ. Alas! we let ourselves be burdened by earthly sorrow, we are distracted by the excitement of the moment, and our spiritual growth is hampered by our attachment to the things of this world. Fervently we should repeat that plea of Holy Mother the Church. “O dawning Sun of righteousness, come and enlighten us, who yet sit in the darkness of suffering, of human reasoning, and of self-love.”

The light of Christ will be revealed perfectly only when we meet Him at the time of His second coming. Then we shall be brought into the light of glory, and we shall “shine as the sun in the kingdom of the Father” (Matt. 13:48). “Sown in corruption we shall rise in incorruption” (I Cor. 15:42). May the day of enlightenment come soon!

Excerpted from *The Light of the World* by Benedict Baur, O.S.B.



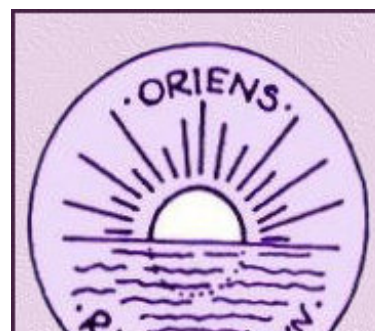
5th O Antiphon:

Symbols: Sun with Rays

Come, and shine on those seated in darkness, and in the shadow of death.

O Dawn, splendor of eternal light, and sun of justice, come, and shine on those seated in darkness, and in the shadow of death.

O Oriens, splendor lucis aeternae, et sol justitiae:



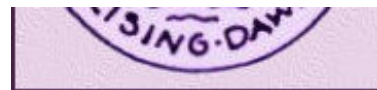
veni, et illumina sedentes in tenebris, et umbra mortis.

Just as the natural sun gives light and life to all upon whom its rays fall, so Christ, the Rising Dawn, dispels darkness and brings eternal life and light.

Recommended Readings: *Malachias* 4:2-6

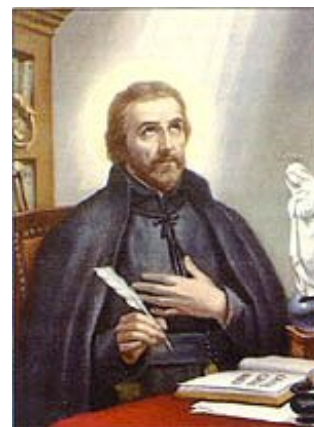


Today is **Day Six** of the Christmas Novena.



St. Peter Canisius

Peter Canisius, the remarkable Jesuit who almost single-handedly reevangelized Central Europe, founded dozens of colleges, contributed to the rebirth of Catholicism by his prodigious writings, and laid the groundwork for the Catholic Reformation north of the Alps. He was born at Nijmegen, Holland, in 1521, and his father was an instructor to princes in the court of the duke of Lorraine. St. Peter Canisius was part of a movement for religious reform as a very young man and in 1543, after attending a retreat given by Blessed Peter Favre, joined the Jesuits and was the eighth professed member of the Society of Jesus.



He worked first in the city of Cologne, becoming a spokesman for the Catholic party. He became a consultor to the cardinal of Augsburg at the Council of Trent and in 1547 was called by St. Ignatius to Rome. He was sent to Sicily to teach, then, after his solemn profession in Rome, was sent back to Germany as the first superior of the German province of the Jesuits.

Peter next began to restore and found colleges, first in Vienna and Prague, and then in Munich, Innsbruck, and throughout northern Germany. He attracted vocations to the Jesuits, and the society began to flourish in Central Europe. He organized the Jesuits into a compact unit and made the society a leading force in the Counter-Reformation. He was in contact with all the Catholic leaders in Germany, and wrote fourteen hundred letters giving support to those laboring for reform. He was the adviser of the emperor and the confidante of three popes. He was consulted by papal legates and nunciatures and was a severe critic of religious and clerical life in post-Reformation Germany.

He recommended far-reaching reforms and had a profound effect upon the education and spiritual life of the clergy. Through his efforts, seminaries were founded, and the popes sent him on important diplomatic missions. In the midst of his many labors, he edited and published editions of the Fathers of the Church, catechisms, spiritual manuals, and textbooks that went into countless editions even in his own lifetime.

He died on December 21, 1597, at Fribourg, Switzerland, and was canonized and declared a Doctor of the Church in 1925.

Patron: Germany; Catholic press; catechism writers.

Things to Do:

- See [Celebrating the Feast of St. Peter Canisius](#) and [Celebrating the Feast of St. Thomas the Apostle \(Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite\)](#) for ideas.

Daily Readings for: December 21, 2020 (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: Hear in kindness, O Lord, the prayers of your people, that those who rejoice at the coming of your Only Begotten Son in our flesh may, when at last he comes in glory, gain the reward of eternal life. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

O God, who for the defense of the Catholic faith made the Priest Saint Petr Canisius strong in virtue and in learning, grant, through his intercession, that those who seek the truth may joyfully find you, their God, and that your faithful people may persevere in confessing you. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Kletzenbrot \(Christmas Fruit Bread\)](#)
- [Paté de Noel \(Christmas Pie\)](#)

- *Risengroed* (Rice Pudding)
- Christmas Baking: Dried Fruit Bread
- Christmas Baking: Kletzenbrot
- Cocoanut Busserln (Meringues)
- Farina Pudding
- Frumenty I
- Frumenty Pudding II
- Krabeli (Springerle)
- Lamb Pie with Poppy Seed Crust
- Lebkuchen I
- Lebkuchen II
- Lebkuchen III (Inexpensive)
- Lebkuchen IV
- Marzipan Cookies
- Nut Busserln (Meringues)
- Rum Balls
- Rum Stangerln (Rum Slices)
- Spanish Wind

ACTIVITIES

- Advent House
- Advent Hymn: Veni, Veni, Emmanuel or O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
- O Antiphons - December 17 - 24
- Advent and the Year of the Eucharist
- A-Thomasing
- Christmas Plays, Los Pastores and Las Posadas
- Las Posadas II
- Catechesis for the Feast of St. Thomas

- Celebrating for the Feast of St. Peter Canisius
- Celebrating on December 21, the Feast of St. Thomas the Apostle in the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite

PRAYERS

- Advent Tower
- Advent Wreath Prayers I
- Christmas Novena including the O Antiphons
- Advent Wreath Prayers II
- Novena to the Infant Jesus
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent (2nd Plan)
- Christmas Anticipation Prayer
- The O Antiphons Verses

LIBRARY

- Saint Peter Canisius | Pope Benedict XVI

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

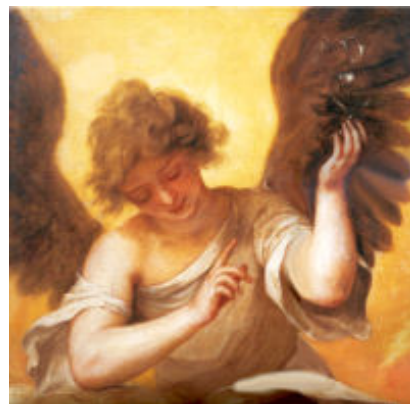
<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-21>

Advent: December 22nd

Tuesday of the Fourth Week of Advent

Old Calendar: St. Frances Xavier Cabrini (Trad some places)

“A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return” (Luke 19:12). This nobleman is Christ, the Son of God, King of all nations. His kingdom is over all men and over all things, both material and spiritual. He has everything in His hand as God and man. But another, Satan, has broken into His kingdom and has made himself master of many of Christ’s subjects. In the old dispensation only a small part of humanity, the chosen people, remained faithful to the almighty King.



Christ, the Son of God, came into this “far country” in order to become man and, by means of humility, obedience, and poverty, to cast out the usurper who had taken His subjects. He came to reassert His dominion over all those who had left Him, both Jews and Gentiles.

According to the 1962 Missal of St. John XXIII the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite, today, in some places, is the feast of St. Frances Xavier Cabrini, Founder of the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart. Her feast is celebrated on [November 13](#) in the Ordinary Rite.



O King of the Gentiles

“Come and save man, whom Thou hast made out of dust.” What is man? He is but a particle of dust, an insignificant creature who has further separated himself from God through sin. He has been cut off from the fountain of truth and banished from God to

darkness and misery. Still in the ruins there dwells a spirit that possesses a capacity for truth. In these ashes there is yet a spark that may be fanned to life to burn with the brilliance of divine life. But only God can revive this flame. For this reason the Church cries out, “Come and save man, whom Thou hast made out of dust.” Save him who is so weak, so miserable and helpless. Remember his nothingness. Consider the many enemies who lay snares to rob him of divine life and to entice him into sin. Think of his obscured knowledge and his proneness to evil, of his tendency to error, and his weakness in the face of temptation. Guard him from the enticements of the world; shelter him from the poison of erroneous teaching; deliver him from the devil and his angels.

During these days before Christmas, the Church contemplates the overwhelming misery of unregenerated mankind. She cries out, “Come and save man, whom Thou hast made out of dust.”

Jesus is King of all nations. “The kings of the earth stood up and the princes met together against the Lord and against His Christ. Let us break their bonds asunder, and let us cast away their yoke from us. He that dwelleth in heaven shall laugh at them, and the Lord shall deride them. Then shall He speak to them in His anger and trouble them in His rage. But I am appointed king by Him over Sion, His holy mountain. . . . The Lord hath said to Me; Thou art My Son; this day have I begotten Thee. Ask of Me and I will give Thee the Gentiles for Thy inheritance, and the utmost parts of the earth for Thy possession” (Ps. 2:2-8). Well may Herod seek the life of the newborn king. Indeed, many kings and tribes and nations in the course of time shall deprecate the divine King, Christ. But to Him has been given all power in heaven and on earth (Matt. 28: i8). Before Him every knee shall bend, and every tongue shall confess that He is the Lord (Phil. 2:10f.).

The more the mighty condemn the kingship of Christ, the more shall He be exalted by the Father.

Now He comes to us in the form of a lovely child. One day in the presence of the Roman governor He will assert His right to kingship. But after this one public confession of His royal origin He withdraws again into the obscurity which He had freely chosen. For the present He is satisfied with this manifestation of His royal dignity. The day will come, however, when He will manifest it with power and majesty as He comes again on the clouds of heaven. Before all nations God will declare: “I have anointed Him King of Sion. My holy mountain.” All men shall pay Him homage as king; all nations shall acclaim Him the King of Glory.



Excerpted from *The Light of the World* by Benedict Baur, O.S.B.

6th O Antiphon:

Symbols: Crown and Scepter

Come, and deliver man, whom You formed out of the dust of the earth.

O King of the Gentiles and their desired One, the Cornerstone that makes both one; Come, and deliver man, whom You formed out of the dust of the earth.

O Rex Gentium, et desideratus earum, lapisque angularis, qui facis utraque unum: veni, et salva hominem, quem de limo formasti.



The crown and scepter signify Christ's universal kingship. As we sing in the fifth O Antiphon, Christ is not only the King of the Jewish nation, but the "Desired One of all," the cornerstone which unites both Jew and Gentile.

Recommended Readings: *Apocalypse* 15:1-4



Today is **Day Seven** of the Christmas Novena.

Daily Readings for: December 22, 2020 (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: O God, who, seeing the human race fallen into death, willed to redeem it by the coming of your Only Begotten Son, grant, we pray, that those who confess his Incarnation with humble fervor may merit his company as their Redeemer. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- Gingersnaps

ACTIVITIES

- Advent House
- Advent Hymn: Veni, Veni, Emmanuel or O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
- Christmas Plays, Los Pastores and Las Posadas
- Las Posadas II
- O Antiphon Days
- O Antiphon Tree Decorations
- O Antiphons - December 17 - 24
- Religion in the Home for Elementary School: December
- Religion in the Home for Preschool: December

PRAYERS

- Advent Tower
- Advent Wreath Prayers I
- Christmas Novena including the O Antiphons
- Advent Wreath Prayers II
- Novena to the Infant Jesus
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent (2nd Plan)
- December Devotion: The Immaculate Conception
- Christmas Anticipation Prayer
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent (1st Plan)
- The O Antiphons Verses

LIBRARY

- [Praise The Lord, King Of All The Earth | Pope Saint John Paul II](#)

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-22>

Advent: December 23rd

Wednesday of the Fourth Week of Advent; Optional Memorial of St. John of Kanty, priest

Today the Church celebrates the optional memorial of St. John of Kanty, priest. Born in Kanty (Cracow, Poland), he taught at the university and became pastor of a parish. He was distinguished for his piety and love of neighbor.

We reach the culmination of the O Antiphons today. In previous antiphons our cry was directed to the Messiah as He manifested Himself to the Chosen People, to the Gentiles, and in nature; now He is addressed in person and asked to remain with us as Emmanuel.

Reading this final antiphon gives the feeling that a climax has indeed come. The very term Emmanuel, God with us, reveals the kindly, human heart of Jesus — He wants to be one of us, a Child of man, with all our human weakness and suffering; He wants to experience how hard it is to be man. He wants to remain with us to the end of time, He wants to dwell within us, He wants to make us share His nature.



O Emmanuel

“O Emmanuel (God with us), our King and Lawgiver, Thou expected one of the nations and their Redeemer, come and save us, O Lord our God.”

Now we are about to receive the Savior, Emmanuel, God with us. God’s only-begotten Son, born of the Father before all time, God of God, light of light, true God of true God, one being with the Father, is about to be born in time. For the salvation of men, He has

come down upon earth and is conceived by the Holy Ghost in a virgin. He shall be called God with us, and yet He will be one in nature with us. He is to be like to us in all things except sin. He wills to share our poverty and to pray and suffer with us; He assumes our guilt. He is God with us in every phase of our life; He even takes our place on the cross, He remains with us in Holy Communion, in our daily Mass, and in our tabernacles. At some time in the future He will still be God with us in His beautiful heaven. All this He has done for us even though we have repeatedly turned our back on Him.

Come and save us." The great God is with us. He has come, not to destroy the sinful world, as He once destroyed Sodom and Gomorrha, but to redeem it from its sins. This redemption is to be accomplished at the cost of great personal sacrifice to Him. As if this did not satisfy the burning ardor of His love, He wills to remain with us in our tabernacles. He incorporates us into Himself and shares His very life with us. We are engrafted in Him as a branch might be grafted to a new tree. "I am the vine, you are the branches" (John 15:5). God with us! We are united to Christ as a limb is united to a body, as a branch is united to a vine. We now belong to Christ and no longer to ourselves. We are one with Him. What a grace, what greatness, what nobility have been conferred upon us! God looking upon us no longer sees miserable specimens of mankind, but members of Christ. When He looks upon Christ, He sees Christ and us as united in one body, as a tree united to its branches. Even the smallest leaf fluttering on the farthest branch belongs to that tree and lives by the sap of that tree. Could He have redeemed us in a more perfect manner than by thus implanting in us and infusing in us His divine life? Let us reflect upon this seriously.

God with us! It was that He might be with us that He came that first Christmas at Bethlehem. He came that He might lift me up from the dust, and that I might share in His life. He will return this Christmas that He may continue and complete that work. It is for the same purpose that He comes in every Holy Mass and Communion, and in each inspiration and grace He gives us. His final coming will be for the same purpose, and will have the further aim of sharing with us His glorified life in heaven. We shall then enjoy the perfect vision of God, perfect love, and the fulfillment of all our desires for all eternity. For all eternity!

Excerpted from *The Light of the World* by Benedict Baur, O.S.B.



7th O Antiphon:

Symbols:Â Manger

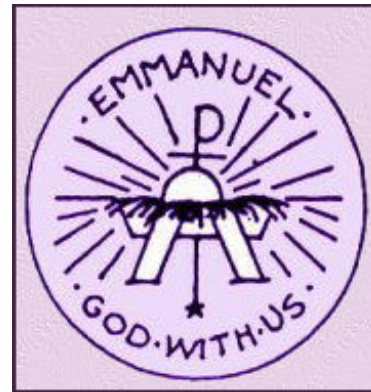
Come to save us, O Lord our God.

O Emmanuel, God with us, our King and Lawgiver, the expected of the nations and their Savior: Come to save us, O Lord our God.

O Emmanuel, Rex et legifer noster, expectatio gentium, et Salvator earum: veni ad salvandum nos, Domine, Deus noster.

The manger reminds us of the simplicity and poverty surrounding the birth of Jesus and is representative of His life of humility.

Recommended Readings:Â *Isaias*Â 9:2-7



St. John of Kanty

John Cantius was born in the year 1397 in the Polish town of Kanty (whence his surname). He became a professor of theology, then parish priest; soon, however, he returned to the professor's chair at the University of Cracow. On foot he visited the holy places of Rome and Palestine. One day, after robbers had deprived him of all his effects, they asked him whether he had anything more. The saint said no, but hardly had they gone when he remembered having sewn some gold pieces inside his clothing; immediately he followed and overtook them. The robbers, astonished at the man's sense of truthfulness, refused to accept the money and returned to him the stolen luggage.



To guard himself and his household from evil gossip he wrote upon the wall of his room (after the example of St. Augustine): *Conturbare cave, non est placare suave,*

diffamare cave, nam revocare grave, i.e. “Guard against causing trouble and slandering others, for it is difficult to right the evil done.” His love of neighbor was most edifying. Often he gave away his own clothing and shoes; then, not to appear barefoot, he lowered his cassock so as to have it drag along the ground. Sensing that his death was near at hand, he distributed whatever he still had to the poor and died peacefully in the Lord at an advanced age. He is honored as one of the principal patrons of Poland.

Patron: Lithuania, Poland.

Symbols: Dressed in a professor’s gown with his arm around the shoulder of a young student whose gaze he directs towards heaven; giving his garments to the poor.

Things to Do:

- Since this day falls so close to Christmas, it would be a good time to perform acts of charity for the poor who will be suffering and alone during this holiday season. Contact your local council or St. Vincent de Paul organization in your parish to find out what families are needy. Make a food and gift basket to present to this family.
- Another good work would be taking the family to visit a nursing home. This time of year is quite depressing for those who do not have family.
- Take some time to learn a little about [Poland and its culture and traditions](#).
- Serve some Polish food, like pierogies and kielbasa (Polish sausage). You can try to make these from scratch, or find them ready-made in your grocery store.
- Recite the Vespers hymn to St. John Kanty, *O Glory of the Polish Race*.

Today is [Day Eight](#) of the Christmas Novena.

Daily Readings for: [December 23, 2020](#)
([Readings on USCCB website](#))

Collect: Almighty ever-living God, as we see how the Nativity of your Son according to the flesh draws near, we pray that to us, your unworthy servants,

mercy may flow from your Word, who chose to become flesh of the Virgin Mary and establish among us his dwelling, Jesus Christ our Lord. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Grant, we pray, almighty God, that by the example of the Priest Saint John of Kanty we may advance in knowledge of holy things and by showing compassion to all, may gain forgiveness in your sight. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Pirohi](#)

ACTIVITIES

- [Advent and the Year of the Eucharist](#)
- [Advent House](#)
- [Advent Hymn: Veni, Veni, Emmanuel or O Come, O Come, Emmanuel](#)
- [Christmas Plays, Los Pastores and Las Posadas](#)
- [Las Posadas II](#)
- [O Antiphon Days](#)
- [O Antiphon Tree Decorations](#)
- [O Antiphons - December 17 - 24](#)

PRAYERS

- [Advent Tower](#)
- [Advent Wreath Prayers I](#)
- [Christmas Novena including the O Antiphons](#)
- [Advent Wreath Prayers II](#)
- [Novena to the Infant Jesus](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent \(2nd Plan\)](#)

- December Devotion: The Immaculate Conception
- O Glory of the Polish Race
- Christmas Anticipation Prayer
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent (1st Plan)
- The O Antiphons Verses

LIBRARY

- None

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-23>

Advent: December 24th

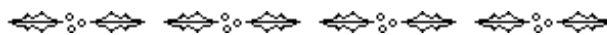
Christmas Eve

Old Calendar: Vigil of the Nativity of Our Lord

“Hail, full of grace! The Lord is with you.” But she was greatly troubled at what was said and pondered what sort of greeting this might be. Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus. He will be great and will be called Son of the Most High, and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he will rule over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end.”



The liturgical texts express wholehearted confidence in the imminent coming of the Redeemer. There is much joyous expectation. Most families have their own observances, customs that should be preserved from generation to generation. Today is the last day of our Christmas Novena.



Christmas Eve at Church

The entire liturgy of Christmas Eve is consecrated to the anticipation of the certain and sure arrival of the Savior: "Today you shall know that the Lord shall come and tomorrow you shall see His glory" (Invitatory of Matins for the Vigil of the Nativity). Throughout Advent we have seen how the preparation for Jesus' coming became more and more precise. Isaiah, John the Baptist and the Virgin Mother appeared throughout the season announcing and foretelling the coming of the King. We learn today that

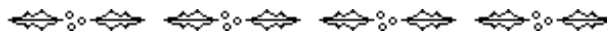


Christ according to His human nature is born at Bethlehem of the House of David of the Virgin Mary, and that according to His divine nature He is conceived of the Spirit of holiness, the Son of God and the Second Person of the Trinity.



The certitude of His coming is made clear in two images. The first is that of the closed gate of paradise. Since our first parents were cast forth from the earthly paradise the gate has been closed and a cherubim stands guard with flaming sword. The Redeemer alone is able to open this door and enter in. On Christmas Eve we stand before the gate of paradise, and it is for this reason that Psalm 23 is the theme of the vigil:

Lift up your gates, O princes, Open wide, eternal gates, That the King of Glory may enter in... .



Christmas Eve at Home

It must be so that the grown-ups may devote themselves with a quiet mind, unhindered by any commotion, to these great mysteries of the Holy Night, that in most Catholic countries the giving of gifts has been advanced to Christmas Eve.

Christmas Eve is an appropriate time for the exchange of gifts, after the Christ-Child has been placed in the manger, and the special prayers before the crib — and a round of Christmas carols — are over. If the gifts are given out before the Midnight Mass, the children can concentrate more easily on the great mystery which is celebrated, when the Greatest Gift is given to all alike, even those who have received no material expression of Christmas love. And then, too, Christmas Day with its two additional Masses can be devoted more to the contemplation of the Christmas mystery and the demands of Christmas hospitality.



The opening of the eternal gates through which the King of Glory may enter is indicated by the wreath on the door of our homes at Christmastide. The Advent wreath, which accompanied the family throughout the season of preparation may be taken down. The violet ribbons are



removed, and it is gloriously decorated with white and gold. It is then placed upon the door as a symbol of the welcome of Christ into our city, our home and our hearts.



On Christmas Eve the whole house should be strewn with garlands and made ready for the Light of the World. The crib is set in a special place of honor, for tonight the central figure of the Nativity scene is to arrive.



Today is **Day Nine** of the Christmas Novena.

Daily Readings for: December 24, 2020 (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: Come quickly, we pray, Lord Jesus, and do not delay, that those who trust in your compassion may find solace and relief in your coming. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- *Cassata* (Cream Tart)
- *Kapusta Czerwona z Grzybami* (Red Cabbage and Mushrooms)
- *Sandacz Pieczony* (Baked Pike)
- Basic Sweet Dough
- Beet Soup
- Buche de Noel
- Bunuelos
- Carp
- Cheese Pierogi (Polish Filled Dumplings)
- Chocolate Cherry Fruit Cake
- Christmas Fruit Bread
- Christstollen I (Stollen)

- Christstollen III (Stollen)
- Christstollen IV (Stollen)
- Codfish
- Coffee Penuche
- Cranberry Foam Cocktail
- Cream Oyster Stew
- Eggnog II
- Eggnog III (Spanish)
- Eggnog Pie
- Fish Salad
- Five-Way Fudge
- German Cinnamon Stars
- Hot Buttered Rum
- Insalata di Rinforzo
- Mazurek with Fruit Topping (Polish Cake)
- Melachrino (Spice Cake)
- Mexican Cold Fish
- Mexican Fritters
- Mocha Butter Cream
- Old-Fashioned Bread Stuffing
- Pierogi (Potato Dumplings)
- Pockets with Cheese or Berries
- Popcorn Balls
- Potato Dumplings
- Quick Fudge
- Simmered Carp
- Six Christmas Dinner Menus
- Soft Molasses Cookies

- Spritz Cookies II
- Ten-Minute Marshmallow Nut Fudge
- Truffled Capon
- Vegetable Soup
- Walnut Butter Crunch
- Wayside Inn Pie
- Yule Log Coffee Cake

ACTIVITIES

- A Christmas Play
- Bread of Angels
- Christ-Candle
- Christmas Eve Celebrations
- Christmas Eve Midnight Mass
- Christmas Eve Supper
- Christmas Eve Supper
- Christmas Plays, Los Pastores and Las Posadas
- Christmas Song: The Shepherds' Song
- Christmas Tree Decorations
- Decorating the Tree
- Irish Christmas Candles
- Oplatek, Old Polish Custom
- Polish Wigilia
- Santa Claus
- Slovakian Generous Supper
- The Christmas Wreath
- The Exchange of Gifts
- The Feasts of Light: Christmas, Epiphany and Candlemas

PRAYERS

- Advent Tower
- Advent Wreath Prayers I
- Blessing of the Christmas Crib
- Blessing of the Christmas Tree in the Home
- Christmas Eve Prayers
- Christmas Novena including the O Antiphons
- Enthroning the Christ Child
- Blessing of the Crib
- Advent Wreath Prayers II
- Christmas Baking and Bread Blessing
- Christmas Morning Prayers
- Christmas Evening Prayers
- Novena to the Infant Jesus
- Christmas Masses
- Blessing of the Christmas Tree
- Book of Blessings: Blessing of a Christmas Tree
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent (2nd Plan)
- December Devotion: The Immaculate Conception
- Christmas Anticipation Prayer
- Book of Blessings: Blessing of the Christmas Tree for the Home (Shorter Rite)
- Book of Blessings: Blessing of a Christmas Tree
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Advent (1st Plan)
- Christmas Eve Ceremony: Blessing of the Crib

LIBRARY

- Celebrating Christmas: with the Accent on Christ | Unknown
- May Christ Teach us to be a Gift for Others | Pope Saint John Paul II
- May the Light of this Night Shine Upon the Future | Pope Saint John Paul II

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-24>

Introduction to Christmas

Christmas is surely the most loved season of the Liturgical Year. Throughout this wonderful time there will always be much hustle and bustle, shopping and baking and gift giving. But precisely because of these human joys and preparations, it is important to learn to keep Christ in Christmas, to remain rooted in the fundamental spirituality of the Christmas Season. This is the joyful celebration of the coming of Our Lord and Savior.

Christmastide extends from First Vespers on Christmas Eve to the Baptism of Our Lord, which usually falls on the Sunday after Epiphany. The mystery of the Incarnate God is one so marvelous that Holy Mother Church celebrates it for eight days, each day of the Octave being considered a “little Christmas”. For the Eucharistic Liturgy, the Church is exultant in her finest vestments of white or gold, making use of incense, as well as extra flowers and candles, to underscore the festal observance of the Lord’s Nativity. The *Gloria*—that Christmas hymn of the angels—is sung once again. With uncontainable joy the faithful raise their voices in numerous carols; and with humble gratitude, they bend their knees during the Creed at the mention of the Incarnation.

There are four different Masses on Christmas—the Vigil Mass, Masses at Midnight, dawn and during the day—each with its own distinct Propers and Readings. The message of all the Readings is the same: ‘Today is born for us a Savior, *God-with-us*, the Light that the darkness cannot overcome.’ Only at the Midnight Mass, however, will the faithful hear chanted the Proclamation of the Birth of Our Savior according to the Roman Martyrology.

It is fitting that the Christmas Octave closes and the civil year begins with the celebration of the Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary under her most exalted title, the Mother of God. Other feasts celebrated within the Octave include: the feast of the Holy Family, the feasts of St. John the Apostle, the Holy Innocents and St. Sylvester, and, in vestments of red, the feasts of the martyrs St. Stephen and St. Thomas Becket.

The magnificent feast of Epiphany is celebrated with the same degree of solemnity as Christmas. However, the Feast is not a repetition of the Christmas mystery, but rather the manifestation of Christ, the light to the nations. On this feast the Church proclaims the date of Easter thereby connecting and orientating all feasts to the greatest Christian Solemnity. With the feast of the Baptism of the Lord (*Theophany*) the season of Christmastide comes to a close.

Christmas in the domestic church is best observed by attendance at Midnight Mass, “an event of major liturgical significance” (*Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy*, #111). If that is not possible, the family may prepare for the feast by praying the Office of Readings before the crib on Christmas Eve. The Church encourages families to attend daily Mass and pray some hours of the Liturgy of the Hours every day during the Christmas Octave. Especially on the Feast of the Holy Family, the members of the family should try to attend Mass together and there renew both their marriage vows and the family’s entrustment to the patronage of the Holy Family.

The symbols of Christmas help to focus our spiritual attention. The crib and its Infant-occupant provide daily food for meditation on the simplicity and poverty, the humility and obedience of our Savior. The tree should remain decorated and lighted throughout Christmastide, or at least through the feast of Epiphany. Under the tree, among the gifts—reminders of Christ, the Gift of God’s infinite love—it is a wonderful practice to include some gifts for the poor, because the “poor belong to every family” (*Directory on Popular Piety and the Liturgy*, #109), and because the Son of God “who was rich...became poor for your sake” (2 Cor 8:9).

Many pious exercises are associated with the eve of the New Year, in Europe called simply St. Sylvester. Coming at the end of the civil year it affords the faithful an opportunity to reflect on how swiftly time passes, to do penance for sins committed during the year, and to give thanks to God for the myriad graces and blessing of the past year. The family might participate in a parish prayer vigil that concludes with Mass, or if that is not possible, a vigil could be held in the home before the crib.

In many cultures, Epiphany is the day on which gifts are exchanged, and homes are blessed and sprinkled with “Epiphany water”. On this feast, the Infant-King in his crib will wear a crown and a scarlet robe while Caspar, Melchoir and Balthasar inscribe their initials above the doorways of the domestic church. May it become “a shelter of health, chastity, self-conquest, humility, charity, mildness, obedience to the Commandments, and thanksgiving to God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen” (*Christmas to Candlemas in a Catholic Home*, Epiphany blessing).

There are many more ideas for customs, traditions, prayers, activities and even recipes on our web site, beginning in the [Christmas Workshop](#). Let us try to celebrate Christmas with the innocence and humility of children, always keeping in mind the wonderful birth of the Christ Child.

[Christmas Workshop](#)

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/commentary/intro-to-christmas/>

Christmas: December 25th

Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord (Christmas)

Old Calendar: The Nativity of Our Lord

Today the Church celebrates the Birth of Jesus Christ, the first day in the octave of Christmas. Throughout Advent the Church longed ardently for the coming of our Savior. Today she celebrates His birth with unrestrained joy. “The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.” The Son of God became man to give us a share in that divine life which is eternally His in the Blessed Trinity. Christmas time begins on December 24 with the first Vespers of the feast and ends on the feast of the Baptism of Christ. White vestments reappear in our churches as a sign of joy.



The Christmas feast is a festival full of joy. The Eternal Word has become Man and dwells among us. The longings of the patriarchs and prophets are fulfilled. With the shepherds we hurry to the manger and adore the Incarnate Son of God, who for us and for our salvation descended upon earth. The purpose of the Christmas feast is beautifully expressed in the Preface of the Nativity: “For by the mystery of the Word made flesh the light of Thy glory hath shone anew upon the eyes of our mind; so that while we acknowledge Him a God seen by men, we may be drawn by Him to the love of things unseen.”



During the Christmas season there is an extensive exchange of greetings and good wishes among friends. These greetings are a reminder of those “good tidings of great joy that shall be to all the people, for this day is born to you a Savior Who is Christ the Lord”

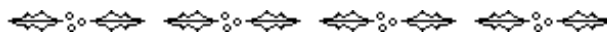
(Lk. 2:11). They are a reminder, too, that all blessings and graces come to us from Christ: “Hath He not also with Him given us all things?” (Rom. 8:32).

During the Christmas season there is also an exchange of gifts. This custom should recall to us that on this day God Himself gave to us the greatest of all gifts, His beloved Son: “God so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son” (John 3: 16).

The Christmas tree, of which the first-known mention was made in 1605 at Strasbourg, was introduced into France and England in 1840. It symbolizes the great family tree of Christ which through David and Jesse has its roots in Abraham, the father of the chosen race. It is often laden with gifts to remind us that Christmas brought us the priceless gifts of grace and of eternal life. It is frequently adorned with lights that recall to us that Christ is the Light of the world enlightening those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.



Though not entirely unknown before, the custom of the Christmas Crib was adopted by St. Francis of Assisi at Greccio, Italy, on Christmas 1225. It is a concrete and vivid way of representing to ourselves the Incarnation and birth of Christ. It depicts in a striking manner the virtues of the newborn Savior, especially His humility, poverty, and charity.



About Christmas

Catholic Culture offers these links to help you experience the joy of Christmas by keeping a spiritual focus on the season.

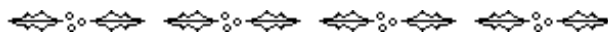
Throughout this wonderful time there will always be much hustle and bustle, shopping and baking and gift giving. But we hope you will refer to the Catholic Culture calendar often for ideas and spiritual nuggets to increase your Christmas joy.

Let us try to celebrate Christmas with the innocence and humility of children always keeping in mind the wonderful birth of the Christ Child.



Joy to the world the Lord has come, let earth receive her King.

- [Christmas at Home and in the Liturgy](#)
- [The Masses of Christmas](#)
- [Put Christ Back in Christmas](#)



Christmas - The First Day

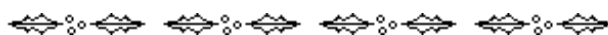
The purest of Virgins gave us our God, who was this day born of her, clothed in the flesh of a Babe, and she was found worthy to feed him at her Breast: let us all adore Christ, who came to save us.

Ye faithful people, let us all rejoice, for our Savior is born in our world: this Day there has been born the Son of the great Mother, and she yet a pure Virgin.

O Queen of the world, and Daughter of a kingly race! Christ has risen from thy womb, as a Bridegroom coming from the bride-chamber: He that rules the stars lies in a Crib. —*Antiphon from the ancient Church of Gaul*



- [Day One activity](#) (*Christmas Drama*)
- [Day One recipe](#) (*Breton Nut Bread*)



Christmas: the Lord's Birth

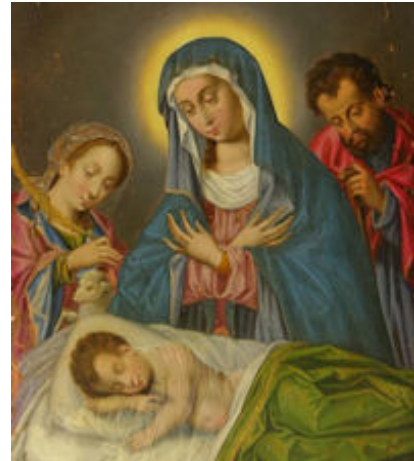
Today is the great solemnity that shows the world that the Word incarnate, the Savior of mankind, is finally born. God becoming truly man is an enormous event [...].

Something truly happens that goes beyond any evolutionary process: the fusion of man and God, the creature and the Creator. It is not the progression of another step in the evolutionary process, but the eruption of a personal action, founded on love, that from this point forward reveals to men new space and possibilities. (Joseph Ratzinger in *God and the World: A Conversation with Peter Seewald*, 2001, p. 197).

Christmas says to us: alone we can't profoundly change the world to remedy it. Alone, we can make the world better or worse, but we can't save it. Christ came

therefore, because left to ourselves; we couldn't escape the 'mortal disease' that has enveloped us from the first moment of conception in our mother's womb. This gives us hope, true hope, and true Christian optimism: I can't do it but He is there! This is the mystery of grace synthesized in the human figure of God incarnate.

Christmas Eve and Christmas day are moments of contemplation. We consider, in many dimensions, the mystery of love that was incarnated for us. First of all, we contemplate the light and joy, without forgetting Jesus and Mary's sorrows and sufferings, and the many difficulties that had surrounded them: the cold, the uncomfortable place, the dangers..... It would be good to accompany these thoughts by reciting and meditating slowly on the Holy Rosary, preferably in front of a crib.



'Blessed grotto of Bethlehem that testified to the wonders! Who, in this hour would not turn our hearts? Who would not prefer the opulent palace of the King?' (P. Guéranger, *L'Anno Liturgico*, Alba 1959 [orig. franc. 1841], I, p122).

Listen to the way that St Bonaventura, the seraphic doctor, invites us to contemplate this scene in his 'Meditation on the life of Jesus Christ': 'You have also lingered, bent your knee, adored the Lord God, venerated His Mother and greeted Joseph, the holy old man, with reverence. Therefore, kiss the feet of the baby Jesus, who lies in the manger, and pray that the Holy Virgin will allow you to hold Him. Take Him between your arms, hold Him and see His lovable face, kiss it with reverence and rejoice with Him. You can do this because He has come to bring salvation to sinners and He has humbly conversed with them, finally giving Himself as food'. (cit. in Guéranger, pp 136-137)

Christmas also reminds us of the great mystery of God's people, of the Church acquired through Christ's blood, animated by the life giving Spirit, governed by the legitimate shepherds in communion with the successor of Peter. On this day in which the Word came to earth, assuming human nature, body, and soul, how can we not think about His Mystical Body that is animated by the Holy Spirit? 'For this reason, by no weak analogy, [the Church] is compared to the mystery of the incarnate Word. As the assumed nature inseparably united to Him, serves the divine Word as a living organ of salvation, so, in a similar way, does the visible social structure of the Church serve the Spirit of Christ, who vivifies it, in the building up of the body' (Vatican II, *Lumen Gentium*, n.8).

Holy Christmas also reminds us of the mystery of Mary as Mother of God, mother of the Incarnated Word, and mother of His mystical body, the Church. Christmas encourages us to contemplate Jesus together with Mary, reflecting on Jesus with ‘His mother’, as recounted many times in the Gospels. If our faith must be fully evangelical, it can not neglect a sane and profound devotion to the Mother of God, as she shows us the easiest way to reach Jesus.

From the [Congregation for the Clergy](#)

Commentary for the Readings in the Extraordinary Form: Christmas “And she brought forth her firstborn Son, and wrapped Him in swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn” (Gospel).

Heroically, in the desert, he warns against the softness of life in the city, pictured in the background. Alive to the danger of a “soft garments” life, he is seen in a rough “garment of camel hair,” carrying a baptismal shell, “preaching a baptism of repentance.” This picture recalls the “triple” Birth of Jesus. (In homage, each priest is privileged to offer three Masses today.)

Our first duty is to adore Jesus as true God in His “eternal” birth as “Son of the Father;” to ignore Him would be everlasting folly (Introit)

Our second duty is to recognize Jesus as true Man in His “earthly” or temporal birth as “Son of Mary.”

Our third duty is to realize more and more the “spiritual” birth of Jesus in our souls at the time of our Baptism. Then were we “Christened,” reborn as members of His Mystical Body.

We must grow with Him during the coming year, by “rejecting ungodliness,” by pursuing good works” (Epistle).

Excerpted from *My Sunday Missal*, Confraternity of the Precious Blood



Daily Readings for: December 25, 2020 (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: O God, who gladden us year by year as we wait in hope for our redemption grant that, just as we joyfully welcome your Only Begotten Son as our Redeemer, we may also merit to face him confidently when he comes again as our Judge. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Bobajka \(Poppy Seed Potato Strips\)](#)
- [Cassata \(Cream Tart\)](#)
- [Rolada z Befszyka \(Steak Rolls\)](#)
- [Turrón \(Soft Spanish Almond Nougat\)](#)
- [Vánočká \(Czech Braided Bread\)](#)
- [Almond Macaroon Cakes](#)
- [Arroz Dulce](#)
- [Basic Sweet Dough](#)
- [Bishopwyn II \(Bishop's Wine\)](#)
- [Biskupsky Chelbicek](#)
- [Breton Nut Bread](#)
- [Brioche](#)
- [Buche de Noel](#)
- [Chocolate Cherry Fruit Cake](#)
- [Christmas Dessert: Rabanadas](#)
- [Christmas Dinner: Black Beans and Rice](#)
- [Christmas Dinner: Chestnut Stuffing](#)

- Christmas Dinner: Rice with Chicken
- Christmas Fruit Bread
- Christmas Lady Cookies (Meringues)
- Christmas Pie
- Christmas Pudding
- Christmas Punch
- Christmas Punch for Children
- Christmas Tree Cookie Decorations
- Christstollen I (Stollen)
- Christstollen II (Stollen)
- Christstollen III (Stollen)
- Christstollen IV (Stollen)
- Christstollen VI (Stollen)
- Coffee Braid
- Coffee Penuche
- Cole Slaw with Boiled Dressing
- Corn Meal Meat Pie
- Cranberry Foam Cocktail
- Cranberry Muffins
- Cream Oyster Stew
- Eggnog I
- Eggnog II
- Eggnog III (Spanish)
- Eggnog Pie
- Five-Way Fudge
- Fondant Icing
- Fruit Punch for Children, with variations
- Galette

- German Cinnamon Stars
- Hard Sauce
- Krabeli (Springerle)
- Lamb's Wool IV
- Lemon Sauce
- Melachrino (Spice Cake)
- Mincemeat for Pie
- Mocha Butter Cream
- Norwegian Berlinerkranser
- Oatmeal Lace Cookies
- Old-Fashioned Bread Stuffing
- Plum Pudding Coffee-Brandy Ice Cream Sauce
- Plum Pudding I
- Plum Pudding II
- Plum Pudding III
- Plum Pudding IV
- Plum Pudding Rum Sauce I
- Plum Pudding Rum Sauce II
- Plum Pudding V
- Popcorn Balls
- Quick Fudge
- Rich Dark Fruit Cake II
- Roast Goose V (with Sauerkraut)
- Rum Sponge Cake
- Sage and Onion Stuffing
- Six Christmas Dinner Menus
- Soft Molasses Cookies
- Sorrel Soup

- Springerle III
- Springerle IV or Anise Cookies
- Spritz Cookies II
- Spritz Cookies II
- St. Nicholas Breads
- Stuffed Turkey II
- Sugar Cookies with Nuts
- Ten-Minute Marshmallow Nut Fudge
- Thin Knots
- Three-Way Fruit Cake
- Torte
- Walnut Butter Crunch
- Wassail
- Wayside Inn Pie
- Yule Log
- Yule Log Coffee Cake
- Zimstern (Swiss Cinnamon Stars)

ACTIVITIES

- A Christmas Play
- A Christmas Quiz
- A Russian German Christmas
- Celebrating Advent and Christmas
- Celebrating Christmas Day at Home
- Christ-Candle
- Christ-Guest at Christmas
- Christingles
- Christmas Crib

- Christmas Crib
- Christmas Folk Song: Shepherds, Up!
- Christmas Hymn: O Infant, God's Eternal Son
- Christmas Ideas for Young Children
- Christmas in Ireland
- Christmas in the Polish Home
- Christmas Music: Caroling, Folk Dancing and Yodeling
- Christmas Pie
- Christmas Play
- Christmas Traditions
- Cooking for Christmas
- Day One ~ Christmas Drama for the Home
- Hymn: From Heaven High, O Angels, Come
- Hymns and Carols
- Irish Christmas Candles
- Making a Christ-Candle
- Meaning and History of Christmas
- Posters for Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany
- Post-Midnight Mass Traditions
- Put Christ Back in Christmas
- The Exchange of Gifts
- The Masses of Christmas
- Giving of Presents

PRAYERS

- Blessing of the Christmas Crib
- Blessing of the Christmas Tree in the Home

- Meal Prayers for the Christmas Season
- Christmas Night Prayers
- Enthroning the Christ Child
- Blessing of the Crib
- Christmas Baking and Bread Blessing
- Christmas Morning Prayers
- Christmas Evening Prayers
- Christmas Masses
- Christmas Table Blessing 1
- Christmas Table Blessing 2
- Christmas Table Blessing 3
- Christmas Table Blessing 4
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas Season (2nd Plan)
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas (1st Plan)
- Christmas Eve Ceremony: Blessing of the Crib

LIBRARY

- 07. A Child Is Born | Cardinal Joseph Mindszenty
- Jesus Christ Is the World's True Wealth | Pope Saint John Paul II

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

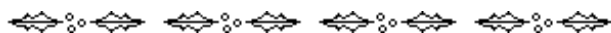
<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-25>

Christmas: December 26th

Feast of St. Stephen, first martyr

Old Calendar: St. Stephen

Today is the second day in the octave of Christmas. The Church celebrates the Feast of St. Stephen, the first Christian martyr. Stoned outside Jerusalem, he died praying for his executioners. He was one of the seven deacons who helped the apostles; he was “filled with faith and with the Holy Spirit,” and was “full of fortitude.” The Church draws a comparison between the disciple and his Master, emphasizing the imitation of Christ even unto the complete gift of self. His name is included in the Roman Canon.



Feast of St. Stephen - Day Two

Saint Stephen is the first martyr of the Church, and is the patron of stonemasons, masons, bricklayers, deacons, headaches, and horses. His story comes from the Acts of the Apostles. He is usually pictured in deacon's vestments, holding the symbol of martyrdom, a palm branch. Sometimes he has a stone in his left hand, to indicate his death by stoning. He is depicted in many images wearing a wreath, which refers to the origin of his name, the Greek word *Stephanos* meaning “wreath.”



"If you know what witness means, you understand why God brings St. Stephen, St. John, and the Holy Innocents to the crib in the cave as soon as Christ is born liturgically. To be a witness is to be a *martyr*. Holy Mother Church wishes us to realize that we were born in baptism to become *Christ* — He

who was the world's outstanding Martyr." — *Love Does Such Things*, by Rev. M. Raymond, O.C.S.O.

- [Day Two activity](#) (*Boxing Day*) (*Christmas Drama*)
- [Day Two recipe](#) (*St. Stephen's Horns*)

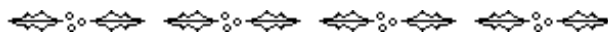


St. Stephen

The deacon Stephen, stoned in Jerusalem two years after the death of Christ, has always been the object of very special veneration by the faithful. He is the first martyr. The account in the Acts of the Apostles relating his arrest and the accusations brought against him emphasize the parallel with our Saviour's trial; he was stoned outside the city wall and died, like his Master, praying for his executioners.

Stephen belongs to the group of seven deacons whom the Apostles associated with their work in order to lighten their load. He was "filled with faith and with the Holy Spirit," "full of grace and strength" he showed himself as a man of God, radiating divine grace and apostolic zeal. As the first witness to Christ he confronted his opponents with quiet courage and the promise made by Jesus (Mark 13.11) was fulfilled: "...Disputing with Stephen they were not able to resist the wisdom and the spirit that spoke."

In St. Stephen, the first martyr, the liturgy emphasizes the imitator of Christ even to the extent of the complete gift of self, to the extent of that great charity which made him pray in his suffering for his executioners. By establishing the feast on the day after Christmas the Church draws an even closer comparison between the disciple and the Master and thus extends his witness to the whole mission of the redeeming Messiah.



Professing the Christian Faith Demands the Heroism of the Martyrs

On the day after the solemnity of Christmas, we celebrate today the feast of St. Stephen, deacon and first martyr. At first glance, to join the memory of the "protomartyr" and the birth of the Redeemer might seem surprising because of the contrast between the peace and joy of Bethlehem and the tragedy of St.



Stephen, stoned in Jerusalem during the first persecution against the nascent Church.

In reality, this apparent opposition is surmounted if we analyze in greater depth the mystery of Christmas. The Child Jesus, lying in the cave, is the only-begotten Son of God who became man. He will save humanity by dying on the cross.



Now we see Him in swaddling clothes in the manger; after His crucifixion, He will again be wrapped in bandages and placed in the sepulcher. It is no accident that the Christmas iconography sometimes represents the divine newborn Child lying in a small sarcophagus, to indicate that the Redeemer was born to die, He was born to give His life in ransom for all.

St. Stephen was the first to follow in the steps of Christ with martyrdom: like the divine Master, he died forgiving and praying for his executioners (cf. Acts 7:60). During the first four centuries of Christianity all the saints venerated by the Church were martyrs.

They are a countless multitude, which the liturgy calls “the white army of martyrs,” (*martyrum candidatus exercitus*). Their death was not a reason for fear and sadness, but of spiritual enthusiasm, which always gave rise to new Christians. For believers, the day of death, and even more so, the day of martyrdom, is not the end of everything, but rather the “passage” to immortal life, it is the day of the final birth, the “dies natalis.” Thus is understood the link that exists between the “dies natalis” of Christ and the “dies natalis” of St. Stephen. If Jesus had not been born on earth, men would not have been able to be born for heaven. Precisely because Christ was born, we are able to be “reborn.”

Also Mary, who took the Redeemer in her arms in Bethlehem, suffered an interior martyrdom. She shared His Passion and had to take Him, once again, in her arms when they took Him down from the cross. To this Mother, who felt the joy of the birth and the anguish of the death of her divine Son, we entrust those who are persecuted and those who are suffering, in different ways, for witnessing and serving the Gospel.

With special spiritual closeness, I am also thinking of the Catholics who maintain their fidelity to the See of Peter without giving in to compromises, at times even at the cost of grave sufferings. The whole Church admires their example and prays that they will have the strength to persevere, knowing that their tribulations are a source of victory, though for the moment they might seem to be a failure.

Angelus Message, Pope Benedict XVI, December 26, 2006

Patron: Casket makers; coffin makers; deacons; headaches; horses; masons; diocese of Owensboro, Kentucky; stone masons.

Symbols: Deacon carrying a pile of rocks; deacon with rocks gathered in his vestments; deacon with rocks on his head; deacon with rocks or a book at hand; stones; palm of martyrdom.

Things to Do:

- Read Pope John Paul II's 2003 *Angelus Message* for the Feast of St. Stephen.

Daily Readings for: December 26, 2020
(Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: Grant, Lord, we pray, that we may imitate what we worship, and so learn to love even our enemies, for we celebrate the heavenly birthday of a man who know how to pray even for his persecutors. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Gingersnaps](#)
- [Roast Suckling Pig](#)
- [Saint Stephen's Scrambled Eggs](#)
- [St. Stephen's Day Stew](#)
- [St. Stephen's Horns](#)
- [Whiskey Punch](#)

ACTIVITIES

- “Boxing” Day
- Acting St. Wenceslas’ Story at Preschool Age
- Celebrating St. Stephen’s Day
- Christmas and the Eucharist
- Christmas Play
- Customs of St. Stephen’s Day
- Day Two ~ Activities for the Feast of St. Stephen
- Feast of St. Stephen
- St. Stephen’s Day
- St. Stephen’s Day Customs
- Story of St. Wenceslas by Joan Windham
- Story of St. Wenceslaus
- What is a Nameday?
- Boxing Day — St. Stephen

PRAYERS

- Christmas Morning Prayers
- Christmas Evening Prayers
- St. Stephen’s Day Night Prayers
- Christmas Table Blessing 1
- Christmas Table Blessing 2
- Christmas Table Blessing 3
- Christmas Table Blessing 4
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas Season (2nd Plan)
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas (1st Plan)
- Litany of St. Stephen, Protomartyr

LIBRARY

- St. Stephen: Meditation upon Sacred Scripture in Order to Understand the Present | Pope Benedict XVI
- Stephen, the Protomartyr | Pope Benedict XVI

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-26>

Christmas: December 27th

Feast of the Holy Family

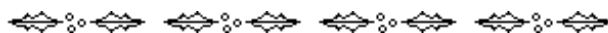
Old Calendar: Sunday in Octave of the Nativity

Scripture tells us practically nothing about the first years and the boyhood of the Child Jesus. All we know are the facts of the sojourn in Egypt, the return to Nazareth, and the incidents that occurred when the twelve-year-old boy accompanied his parents to Jerusalem. In her liturgy the Church hurries over this period of Christ's life with equal brevity. The general breakdown of the family, however, at the end of the past century and at the beginning of our own, prompted the popes, especially the far-sighted Leo XIII, to promote the observance of this feast with the hope that it might instill into Christian families something of the faithful love and the devoted attachment that characterize the family of Nazareth. The primary purpose of the Church in instituting and promoting this feast is to present the Holy Family as the model and exemplar of all Christian families.



— Excerpted from *With Christ Through the Year*, Rev. Bernard Strasser, O.S.B.

The feast of [St. Thomas Becket](#), which is ordinarily celebrated today, is superseded by the Sunday liturgy.



Feast of the Holy Family - Day Five

Today is the feast day of the Holy Family, but also every family's feast day, since the Holy Family is the patron and model of all Christian families. Today should be a huge family

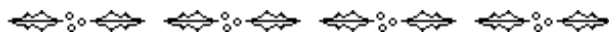


feast, since it is devoted entirely to the Holy Family as a model for the Christian family life. As Rev. Edward Sutfin states:

“The children must learn to see in their father the foster-father St. Joseph, and the Blessed Mother as the perfect model for their own mother. The lesson to be learned is both practical and theoretical, in that the children must learn how to obey and to love their parents in thought, word and action, just as Christ was obedient to Mary and Joseph. Helping mother in the kitchen and in the house work, and helping father in his odd jobs about the home thus take on a new significance by being performed in a Christ-like spirit.” (*True Christmas Spirit*, ©1955, St. Meinrad Archabbey, Inc.)



- [Day Three activity](#) (*Holy Family Celebration*)
- [Day Three recipe](#) (*Popcorn Balls*)



The Holy Family

Marriage is too often conceived as the sacrament which unites a man and a woman to form a couple. In reality, marriage establishes a family, and its purpose is to increase the number of the elect, through the bodily and spiritual fecundity of the Christian spouses.

1. Every marriage intends children. Although Mary and Joseph were not united in a carnal way, their marriage is a true marriage: an indissoluble, exclusive union, wholly subordinated to the child. Mary and Joseph are united only in order to bring Jesus into the world, to protect and raise him. They have only one child, but he contains the whole of mankind, even as Isaac, an only child, fulfilled the promise made to Abraham of a countless progeny.

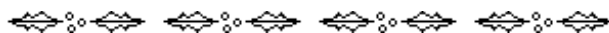


2. The purpose of every marriage is to establish a Christian family. The Holy Family observed the religious laws of Israel; it went in pilgrimage to Jerusalem every year with other Jewish families (Lk. 2:41). Jesus saddens and amazes his father and his mother because to their will and company he prefers “to be in his Father’s house”. Thus it may happen that God’s will obliges the family to make disconcerting sacrifices. Yet every

Christian family must live in harmony and in prayer, which are the pledges of joy and union.

3. “He remained obedient to them.” Jesus was God. And through the fullness of grace Mary stood above Joseph. Nevertheless — if we except the event in the Temple — Joseph remained the head of the family; he took the initiative (as when the Holy Family fled to Egypt), and in Nazareth Jesus obeyed his parents.

Excerpted from *Bread and the Word*, A.M. Roguet



The Holy Family: Jesus, Mary and Joseph

The devotion to the Holy Family was born in Bethlehem, together with the Baby Jesus. The shepherds went to adore the Child and, at the same time, they gave honor to His family. Later, in a similar way, the three wise men came from the East to adore and give honor to the newborn King with gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh that would be safeguarded by His family.

We can go further to affirm that in a certain sense Christ, Himself, was the first devotee of His family. He showed His devotion to His mother and foster father by submitting Himself, with infinite humility, to the duty of filial obedience towards them. This is what St

Bernard of Clairvaux said in this regard, ‘*God, to whom angels submit themselves and who principalities and powers obey, was subject to Mary; and not only to Mary but Joseph also for Mary’s sake [...]. God obeyed a human creature; this is humility without precedent. A human creature commands God; it is sublime beyond measure.*’ (First Homily on the ‘Missus Est’).

Today’s celebration demonstrates Christ’s humility and obedience with respect to the fourth commandment, whilst also highlighting the loving care that His parents exercised in His keeping. The servant of God, Pope John Paul II, in 1989, entitled his Apostolic Exhortation, ‘*Redemptoris Custos*’ (Guardian of the Redeemer) which was dedicated to the person and the mission of Saint Joseph in the life of Christ and of the Church. After exactly a century, he resumed the teaching of Pope Leo XIII, for who Saint Joseph ‘*.. shines among all mankind by the most august dignity, since by divine will, he was the*



guardian of the Son of God and reputed as His father among men’ (Encyclical *Quamquam Pluries* [1889] n. 3). Pope Leo XIII continued, ‘.. *Joseph became the guardian, the administrator, and the legal defender of the divine house whose chief he was.[...] It is, then, natural and worthy that as the Blessed Joseph ministered to all the needs of the family at Nazareth and girt it about with his protection, he should now cover with the cloak of his heavenly patronage and defend the Church of Jesus Christ.*’ Not many years before, blessed Pope Pius IX had proclaimed Saint Joseph, ‘Patron of the Catholic Church’ (1870)

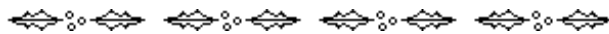
Almost intuitively, one can recognize that the mysterious, exemplary, guardianship enacted by Joseph was conducted firstly, in a yet more intimate way, by Mary. Consequently, the liturgical feast of the Holy Family speaks to us of the fond and loving care that we must render to the Body of Christ. We can understand this in a mystical sense, as guardians of the Church, and also in the Eucharistic sense. Mary and Joseph took great care of Jesus’ physical body. Following their example, we can and must take great care of His Mystical Body, the Church, and the Eucharist which He has entrusted to us. If Mary was, in some way, ‘*the first tabernacle in history*’ (John Paul II *Ecclesia de Eucharistia*, n. 55) then we the Tabernacle in which Our Lord chose to reside in person, in His Real Presence, was also entrusted to us. We can learn from Mary and Joseph! What would they ever have overlooked in the care of Jesus’ physical body? Is there something, therefore, that we can withhold for the right and adoring care of His Eucharistic Body? No amount of attention, no sane act of love and adoring respect will ever be too much! On the contrary, our adoration and respect will always be inferior to the great gift that comes to us in the Holy Eucharist.

Looking at the Holy Family, we see the love, the protection, and the diligent care that they gave to the Redeemer. We can not fail to feel uneasiness, perhaps a shameful thought, for the times in which we have not rendered the appropriate care and attention to the Blessed Eucharist. We can only ask for forgiveness and do penance for all the sacrilegious acts and the lack of respect that are committed in front of the Blessed Eucharist. We can only ask the Lord, through the intercession of the Holy Family of Nazareth, for a greater love for their Son Incarnate, who has decided to remain here on earth with us every day until the end of time.

From the [Congregation for the Clergy](#)

Things to Do:

- Let us imitate the Holy Family in our Christian families, and our family will be a cell and a prefiguration of the heavenly family. Say a prayer dedicating your family to the Holy Family. Also pray for all families and for our country to uphold the sanctity of the marriage bond which is under attack.
- Read more about [Pope Leo XIII](#) who instituted the Feast of the Holy Family and read his encyclical [On Christian Marriage](#). You can also check out the Vatican's page of [Papal documents on the Family](#).
- Read the explanation of Jesus' knowledge in the activities section. Read Pope Pius X's *Syllabus of Errors* which condemns the modernist assertion that Christ did not always possess the consciousness of His Messianic dignity.
- Have the whole family participate in cooking dinner. You might try a Lebanese meal. Some suggestions: stuffed grape leaves, stuffed cabbage rolls, lentils and rice, spinach and meat pies, chicken and dumplings, hummus, Lebanese bread, tabbouleh — a Lebanese salad and kibbi, a traditional Lebanese dish of specially ground meat mixed with spices and cracked wheat. This is the same kind of food that Mary served Jesus and St. Joseph. It's healthy and delicious.



Commentary for the Readings in the Extraordinary Form: Sunday in the Octave of the Nativity “Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and for the rise of many in Israel” (Gospel).

This prophecy that Jesus is also “a sign that shall be contradicted,” indicates what we, too, may expect as “sons of God”; yet it strengthens our hope, if we but place ourselves daily under Mary’s care; then the last words of the Gospel may also be applied to us: “the Child grew and became strong...full of wisdom.”

Yes, we are the “sons” and heirs” of God, Whom we can call “Father,” because of “His Son, born of a woman,” Mary (Epistle). Hence, Jesus, our Brother, actually “leapt down from heaven...with beauty...with strength” (Introit), to “direct our actions” in His “Name”(Prayer).

In the Gradual we offer our “good word” of gratitude for the final victory. Then



we will realize that Antichrists “who sought the Child’s life are dead” (Communion Verse).

Excerpted from *My Sunday Missal*, Confraternity of the Precious Blood

Daily Readings for: December 27, 2020 (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: O God, who were pleased to give us the shining example of the Holy Family, graciously grant that we may imitate them in practicing the virtues of family life and in the bonds of charity, and so, in the joy of your house, delight one day in eternal rewards. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Stuffed Cabbage Rolls](#)

ACTIVITIES

- [Christmas at Home and in the Liturgy](#)
- [Day Three ~ Activities for the Feast of the Holy Family](#)
- [Explanation of the Verse: ‘Jesus increased in wisdom and in stature’](#)
- [Feast of the Holy Family](#)
- [Feast of the Holy Family - II](#)
- [Introducing the Holy Family to Your Baby](#)
- [The Home, a Training Ground](#)

PRAYERS

- [Consecration of the Family to the Holy Family I](#)

- Consecration of the Family to the Holy Family II
- Parents' Prayer for Children
- Consecration to the Holy Family
- Christmas Table Blessing 1
- Christmas Table Blessing 2
- Christmas Table Blessing 3
- Christmas Table Blessing 4
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas Season (2nd Plan)
- Parental Blessing
- Prayer to the Holy Family
- Prayer of Parents for Their Children
- Novena to the Holy Family
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas (1st Plan)

LIBRARY

- Benedict XVI Angelus Address for Feast of the Holy Family 2010 | Pope Benedict XVI
- Christian Marriage: a Covenant of Love and Life | Cardinal Bernard Law
- Holy Family Teaches Us What Is Essential | Pope Saint John Paul II
- Indulged Prayer for a Christian Family | Unknown

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-27>

Christmas: December 28th

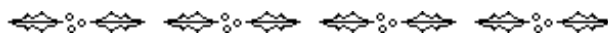
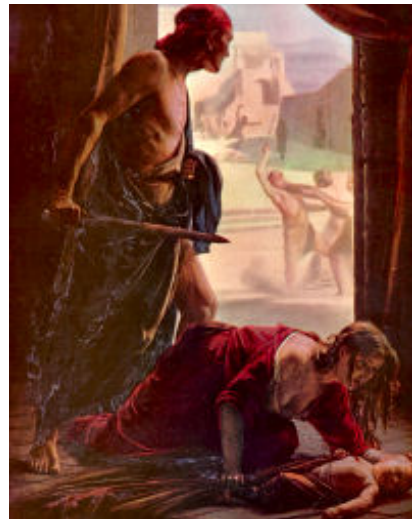
Feast of the Holy Innocents, martyrs

Old Calendar: The Holy Innocents

“A voice is heard in Ramah, weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because they are no more.”

During this octave of Christmas the Church celebrates the memory of the small children of the neighborhood of Bethlehem put to death by Herod. Sacrificed by a wicked monarch, these innocent lives bear witness to Christ who was persecuted from the time of His birth by a world which would not receive Him. It is Christ Himself who is at stake in this mass-murder of the children; already the choice, for or against Him, is put clearly before men. But the persecutors are powerless, for Christ came to perform a work of salvation that nothing can prevent; when He fell into the hands of His enemies at the time chosen by God it was to redeem the world by His own Blood.

Our Christmas joy is tempered today by a feeling of sadness. But the Church looks principally to the glory of the children, of these innocent victims, whom she shows us in heaven following the Lamb wherever He goes.



Feast of the Holy Innocents - Day Four

The Holy Innocents saved the Child Jesus from death by King Herod by the shedding of their own blood. The Holy Innocents are the special patrons of small children, who can please the Christ Child by being obedient and helpful to parents, and by sharing their toys and loving their siblings and playmates.



The feast of the Holy Innocents is an excellent time for parents to inaugurate the custom of blessing their children. From the Ritual comes the form which we use on solemn occasions, such as First Communion. But parents can simply sign a cross on the child's forehead with the right thumb dipped in holy water and say: May God bless you, and may He be the Guardian of your heart and mind—the Father, + Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.



- [Day Four activity](#) (*Holy Innocents*)
- [Day Four recipe](#) (*Blanc Mange*)



The Holy Innocents

Today, dearest brethren, we celebrate the birthday of those children who were slaughtered, as the Gospel tells us, by that exceedingly cruel king, Herod. Let the earth, therefore, rejoice and the Church exult — she, the fruitful mother of so many heavenly champions and of such glorious virtues. Never, in fact, would that impious tyrant have been able to benefit these children by the sweetest kindness as much as he has done by his hatred. For as today's feast reveals, in the measure with which malice in all its fury was poured out upon the holy children, did heaven's blessing stream down upon them.

“Blessed are you, Bethlehem in the land of Judah! You suffered the inhumanity of King Herod in the murder of your babes and thereby have become



worthy to offer to the Lord a pure host of infants. In full right do we celebrate the



heavenly birthday of these children whom the world caused to be born unto an eternally blessed life rather than that from their mothers' womb, for they attained the grace of everlasting life before the enjoyment of the present. The precious death of any martyr deserves high praise because of his heroic confession; the death of these children is precious in the sight of God because of the beatitude they gained so quickly. For already at the beginning of their lives they pass on. The end of the present life is for them the beginning of glory. These then, whom Herod's cruelty tore as sucklings from their mothers' bosom, are justly hailed as "infant martyr flowers"; they were the Church's first blossoms, matured by the frost of persecution during the cold winter of unbelief.

— St. Augustine

Things to Do:

- Read this [article by Mgr. Luciano Alimandi](#) on the humility of children.

Daily Readings for: December 28, 2020 (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: O God, whom the Holy Innocents confessed and proclaimed on this day, not by speaking but by dying, grant, we pray, that the faith in your which we confess with our lips may also speak through our manner of life. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Almond and Honey Ring](#)
- [Blanc Mange](#)
- [Innocents' Pabulum](#)
- [Oven-Baked Rice Pudding](#)
- [Christ's Diapers](#)

ACTIVITIES

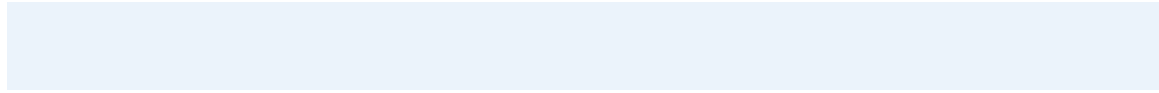
- Celebrating the Holy Innocents
- Christmas Play
- Day Four ~ Celebrating the Feast of the Holy Innocents
- Feast of the Holy Innocents—The Youngest's Day

PRAYERS

- Roman Ritual: Blessing of Children
- Blessing of Children on Holy Innocents
- Christmas Morning Prayers
- Christmas Evening Prayers
- Holy Innocents or Childermas Day: Parental Blessing of Children
- Christmas Table Blessing 1
- Christmas Table Blessing 2
- Christmas Table Blessing 3
- Christmas Table Blessing 4
- Book of Blessings: Blessing of Children
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas Season (2nd Plan)
- Parental Blessing
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas (1st Plan)

LIBRARY

- Bring Back the Creche! | John Phillips
- The Hope of Salvation for Infants Who Die Without Being Baptized | International Theological Commission



View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

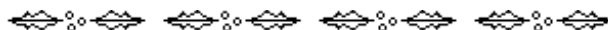
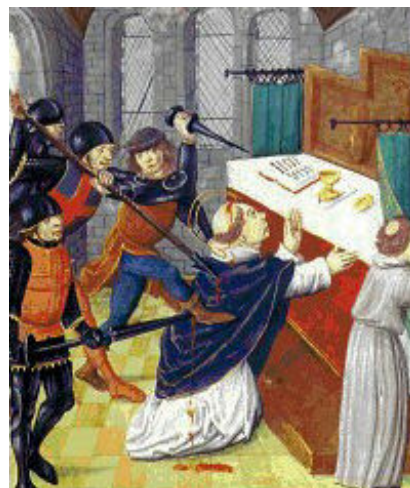
<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-28>

Christmas: December 29th

Fifth Day in the Octave of Christmas; Optional Memorial of St. Thomas Becket, bishop and martyr

Old Calendar: St. Thomas of Canterbury

Today is the fifth day in the octave of Christmas. The Church celebrates the optional memorial of St. Thomas Becket, bishop and martyr. He was born in London and after studying in Paris, he first became chancellor to the king and then in 1162 was chosen Archbishop of Canterbury. He went from being “a patron of play-actors and a follower of hounds” to being a “shepherd of souls.” He absorbed himself in the duties of his new office, defending the rights of the Church against Henry II. This prompted the king to exile him to France for six years. After returning to his homeland he endured many trials and was murdered by agents of the king.



Fifth Day in the Octave of Christmas - Day Five

Given the tempo of the liturgical season with its feasts it is easy to overlook that one saint who for many centuries was, after Mary and Joseph, the most venerated person in European Christendom.

St. Thomas Becket, Archbishop of Canterbury was assassinated in his cathedral on December 29, 1170 because of his opposition to his former friend, King Henry II of England, who was encroaching on the liberties of the English Church.



Devotion to him spread like wildfire. He was enshrined in the hearts of men, and in their arts. In statues and stained glass, in song and story this good bishop was everywhere to be found: France, Italy, Spain, Sweden. Many miracles were attributed to his heavenly advocacy. — Excerpted from *Days of the Lord*

- [Day Five activity](#) (*Caroling*)
- [Day Five recipe](#) (*Popcorn Balls*)



St. Thomas Becket (also known as St. Thomas of Canterbury)

Thomas Becket was born in 1118 of a merchant family. He studied in London and Paris, entered the service of Archbishop Theobald of Canterbury, became Lord Chancellor under King Henry II in 1155, and in 1162 Archbishop of Canterbury. Till then a submissive courtier, he now initiated a fearless struggle against the king for the freedom of the Church and the inviolability of ecclesiastical property, occasioning his imprisonment, exile, and finally martyrdom (December 29, 1170). Canonization came quickly (1173); in 1539 King Henry VIII ordered his remains burned.

Formerly the Breviary included this summary of the saint's last days: "Calumniators informed the king that the bishop was agitating against him and the peace of the realm; and the king retorted that with one such priest he could not live in peace. Hearing the royal displeasure, several godless courtiers agreed to do their sovereign a favor by assassinating Thomas. Secretly they traveled to Canterbury and fell upon the bishop while he was attending Vespers. His priests rushed to his aid and tried to bar the church door; Thomas opened it himself with these words: The house of God may not be defended like a fortress. I gladly face death for the Church of God. Then to the soldiers: I command it in the Name of God: No harm may be done to any of mine. Thereupon he cast himself on his knees, commended his flock and himself to God, to the Blessed Virgin Mary, to St. Denis and other holy patrons of his church, and with the same heroic courage with which he had withstood the king's laws, he bowed his holy head to the sacrilegious sword on December 29, 1170."



With all the strength that is given us for the defense of God's rights, we must resist those who seek to subject the Church to their power, even if they are those to whom on

other grounds we owe service. In St. Thomas of Canterbury the Church celebrates one of her great bishops; by applying to him the Gospel of the Good Shepherd she venerates in him the true pastor of Christ's flock who gave his life for his sheep.

Patron: Clergy; secular clergy; Exeter College Oxford; Portsmouth, England.

Symbols: Sword through a mitre; pallium and archbishop's cross; battle axe and crosier; red chasuble; altar and sword.

Often portrayed as: Archbishop with a wounded head; archbishop holding an inverted sword; archbishop kneeling before his murderers; archbishop being murdered in church.

Things to Do:

- Read more about this historical event. For some web sources see [The Murder of Thomas Becket, 1170](#), and more information on [Henry II](#). Watch this You Tube video of [Canterbury Cathedral](#).
- Some wonderful literature is based on this saint. *Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer (1342 - 1400) follows a group of 30 pilgrims traveling to the Canterbury Cathedral, the pilgrimage spot of St. Thomas Becket. T. S. Eliot wrote a play called *Murder in the Cathedral* based on St. Thomas' murder.

Daily Readings for: December 29, 2020
(Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: Almighty and invisible God, who dispersed the darkness of this world by the coming of your light, look, we pray, with serene countenance upon us, that we may acclaim with fitting praise the greatness of the Nativity of your Only Begotten Son, Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

O God, who gave the Martyr Saint Thomas Becket the courage to give up his life for the sake of justice, grant, through his intercession, that, renouncing our life for the sake of Christ in this world, we may find it in heaven.

Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Castle Apple Pie](#)

ACTIVITIES

- [Christmas and the Eucharist](#)
- [Christmas at Home and in the Liturgy](#)
- [Christmas Play](#)
- [Cut-outs and Shadow Boxes](#)
- [Day Five ~ Activities for the Feast of St. Thomas Becket](#)
- [Nameday Celebration Prayers and Ideas for Saint Thomas](#)
- [Namedays](#)
- [Religion in the Home for Elementary School: December](#)
- [Religion in the Home for Preschool: December](#)
- [What is a Nameday?](#)

PRAYERS

- [Christmas Morning Prayers](#)
- [Christmas Evening Prayers](#)
- [Christmas Table Blessing 1](#)
- [Christmas Table Blessing 2](#)
- [Christmas Table Blessing 3](#)
- [Christmas Table Blessing 4](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas Season \(2nd Plan\)](#)
- [Prayer for St. Thomas a Becket](#)

- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas \(1st Plan\)](#)

LIBRARY

- None

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-29>

Christmas: December 30th

Sixth day in the Octave of Christmas

It would be ideal if we could devote several days of the Christmas octave to quiet contemplation, entering ever more deeply into the sweet and profound mystery of the Incarnation; yet much of the time is devoted to the saints. All the more precious, therefore, is this day, an unencumbered Christmas day.

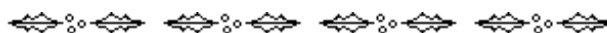


December 30, Sixth Day in the Octave of Christmas - Day Six

God is your beatitude. The things of time are toys. You are eternity's child and your eternity has already begun! There is a compelling urgency to every day and every hour of the day. In it we are to witness to the truth — that God greeted and gifted us at Christmas.

If you know what witness means, you understand why God brings St. Stephen, St. John, and the Holy Innocents to the crib in the cave as soon as Christ is born liturgically. To be a witness is to be a *martyr*. Holy Mother Church wishes us to realize that we were born in baptism to become *Christ* — He who was the world's outstanding Martyr. — *Love Does Such Things*, by Rev. M. Raymond, O.C.S.O.

- [Day Sixth activity](#) (*Gingerbread Bowls*)
- [Day Sixth recipe](#) (*Lamb's Wool*)



God became Man. Utterly incomprehensible is this truth to our puny human minds! That the eternal God whom heaven and earth cannot contain, who bears the world in His hand as a nutshell, before whom a thousand years are as one day — that this eternal, omnipotent God should become Man! Would it not have been a tremendous condescension if for the redemption of mankind He had simply sent an angel? Would it not have proven His loving mercy had He appeared for a mere moment in the splendor of His majesty, amid thunder and lightning, as once on Sinai? No, such would have shown far too little of His love and kindness. He wanted to be like us, to become a child of man, a poor child of poorest people; He wished to be born, in a cave, in a strange land, in hostile surroundings. Cold wind, hard straw, dumb animals — these were there to greet Him. The scene fills us with amazement; what other can we do than fall down in silence and adore!

In heaven only will we comprehend the profound implications of Christ's redemptive acts, surely one of the exquisite joys of celestial blessedness. But some points Mother Church allows us to anticipate here below. She, enlightened by the Holy Spirit, is ever the recollected woman "who meditates on all the words of God and keeps them in her heart." She tells us: God became Man that we might share His divine nature. Isn't that mankind's long-cherished dream? "You shall be as God, knowing good and evil," Satan whispered into man's ear in paradise; and his whisper was believed. What a miserable betrayal! Indeed, man experienced good and evil, but he had not turned divine. Thousands upon thousands of years of dreadful distance from divinity, with nought but failure in scanning the skies! Not by pride can man become God, but by submission, humility.

Bethlehem gave the great revelation. God put on the beggar's garb, became a tiny, crying Babe in order to show man how to become divine. In paradise a fallen angel had promised: Eat of this fruit and you will be like God. He ate and became a prisoner of hell. On Christmas night another angel (the Church) stands before man, offers him a Good and says: Eat of this and you will be like God. For the divine Food, the Flesh of the incarnate Son of God, makes us "partakers of the divine nature."

— *The Church's Year of Grace*, Pius Parsch



Daily Readings for: December 30, 2020 (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: Grant, we pray, almighty God, that the newness of the Nativity in the flesh of your Only Begotten Son may set us free, for ancient servitude holds us bound beneath the yoke of sin. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Day Six Activity ~ Christmas Gingerbread Bowls](#)

ACTIVITIES

- [Christmas Play](#)

PRAYERS

- [Christmas Morning Prayers](#)
- [Christmas Evening Prayers](#)
- [Christmas Table Blessing 1](#)
- [Christmas Table Blessing 2](#)
- [Christmas Table Blessing 3](#)
- [Christmas Table Blessing 4](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas Season \(2nd Plan\)](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas \(1st Plan\)](#)

LIBRARY

- [None](#)

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

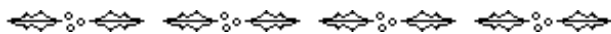
<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-30>

Christmas: December 31st

Seventh Day in the Octave of Christmas; Optional Memorial of St. Sylvester I, pope

Old Calendar: St. Sylvester I

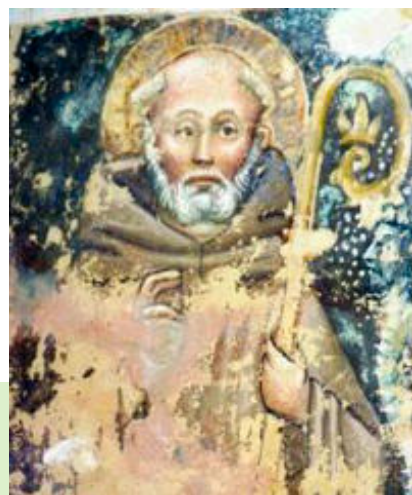
Today is the seventh day in the octave of Christmas. The Church celebrates the optional memorial of St. Sylvester I, pope and confessor. He ruled the Church during the reign of Constantine when the Arian heresy and the Donatist schism had provoked great discord. He convoked the first Ecumenical Council of Nicaea.

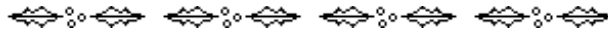


Seventh Day in the Octave of Christmas - Day Seven

The last day of the year is also the feast of St. Sylvester — bishop of Rome in 314. Constantine gave him the Lateran Palace, which became the cathedral church of Rome. Many legends exist about Sylvester. He supposedly cured Constantine from leprosy and later baptized him on his deathbed. New Year's Eve, along with its innocent gaiety, is really a day for serious reflection. On the eve of the civil New Year the children may join their parents in a holy hour, in prayer and thanksgiving for the gifts and benefits which God has given them in the past year, and to pray for necessary graces in the forthcoming civil year.

- [Day Seven activity](#) (*New Year's Eve Party*)
- [Day Seven recipe](#) (*Silvesterpunsch*)

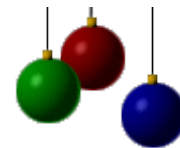




St. Sylvester

St. Sylvester, a native Roman, was chosen by God to govern His holy Church during the first years of Her temporal prosperity and triumph over Her persecuting enemies. Pope Melchiades died in January, 314. St. Sylvester was chosen as his successor. He governed the Church for more than twenty-one years, ably organizing the discipline of the Roman Church, and taking part in the negotiations concerning Arianism and the Council of Nicaea. He also sent Legates to the first Ecumenical Council.

During his Pontificate were built the great churches founded at Rome by Constantine — the Basilica and baptistery of the Lateran, the Basilica of the Sessorian palace (Santa Croce), the Church of St. Peter in the Vatican, and several cemeterial churches over the graves of martyrs. No doubt St. Sylvester helped towards the construction of these churches. He was a friend of Emperor Constantine, confirmed the first General Council of Nicaea (325), and gave the Church a new discipline for the new era of peace. He might be called the first “peace Pope” after centuries of bloody persecution. He also established the Roman school of singing. On the Via Salaria he built a cemeterial church over the Catacomb of St. Priscilla, and it was in this church that he was buried when he died on December 31, 335.



Numerous legends dramatize his life and work, e.g., how he freed Constantine from leprosy by baptism; how he killed a ferocious dragon that was contaminating the air with his poisonous breath. Such legends were meant to portray the effects of baptism and Christianity’s triumph over idolatry. For a long time the feast of St. Sylvester was a holyday of obligation. The Divine Office notes: He called the weekdays *feria*, because for the Christian every day is a “free day” (the term is still in use; thus Monday is *feria secunda*).

Compiled from *Heavenly Friends*, Rosalie Marie Levy and *The Church’s Year of Grace*, Pius Parsch

Daily Readings for: December 31, 2020

(Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: Almighty ever-living God, who in the Nativity of your Son established the beginning and fulfillment of all religion, grant, we pray, that we may be numbered among those who belong to him, in whom is the fullness of human salvation. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Come, O Lord, to the help of your people, sustained by the intercession of Pope Saint Sylvester, so that, running the course of this present life under your guidance we may happily attain life without end. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- *Admiralpunsch* (Admiral Punch—New Year's Eve Punch)
- *Kalter Eierwein* (Cold Egg Wine)
- *Risgrynsgröt* (Rice Porridge)
- *Silvesterpunsch* (Cold New Year's Eve Punch)
- *Silvesterpunsch* (Sylvester Punch)
- *Silvesterpunsch* (Warm New Year's Eve Punch)
- Dark Fruit Cake I
- Eggnog II
- Eggnog III (Spanish)
- Flaming Brandy Punch
- Herring Salad
- Jellied Pineapple Salad
- Kringler
- Mulled Wine I
- Mulled Wine II
- New Year's Eve Punch

- New Year's Eve: Midnight Buffet Menu
- White Fruit Cake
- Wine Punch I (Sangria)

ACTIVITIES

- Christmas Play
- Day Seven ~ Activities for New Year's Eve
- Game of Thanks
- Gumdrops on a String
- Handkerchief Game
- I Want to Be Ready
- New Year's Eve and New Year's Day
- New Year's Eve Family Celebration
- New Year's Eve Party
- Quotations Game
- Treasure Hunt

PRAYERS

- Christmas Morning Prayers
- Christmas Evening Prayers
- Christmas Table Blessing 1
- Christmas Table Blessing 2
- Christmas Table Blessing 3
- Christmas Table Blessing 4
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas Season (2nd Plan)
- An Act of Consecration of the Human Race to the Sacred Heart of Jesus

- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas \(1st Plan\)](#)

LIBRARY

- None

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2020-12-31>

Christmas: January 1st

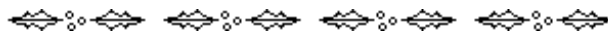
Octave of Christmas and Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God (Holy Day of Obligation USA)

Old Calendar: Octave Day of Christmas; Circumcision of Our Lord

Today the Church celebrates the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, our Lady's greatest title. This feast is the octave of Christmas. In the modern Roman Calendar only Christmas and Easter enjoy the privilege of an octave. According to the 1962 Missal of St. John XXIII the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite, today is the Solemnity of Circumcision of Our Lord.

"Mary, the all-holy ever-virgin Mother of God, is the masterwork of the mission of the Son and the Spirit in the fullness of time. For the first time in the plan of salvation and because his Spirit had prepared her, the Father found the dwelling place where his Son and his Spirit could dwell among men. In this sense the Church's Tradition has often read the most beautiful texts on wisdom in relation to Mary. Mary is acclaimed and represented in the liturgy as the "Seat of Wisdom." — *Catechism of the Catholic Church* 721

A plenary indulgence may be gained by reciting or singing the hymn *Veni Creator Spiritus* on the first day of the year. This hymn is traditionally sung for beginnings of things, calling on the Holy Spirit before endeavoring something new.



Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God - Day Eight

Although New Year's Day is not celebrated by the Church, this day has been observed as a holy day of obligation since early



times due to the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. Each family and country has different traditional foods to eat on New Year's Day, with lentils being the main superstition: ill luck befalling those who do not eat lentils at the beginning of the year.

New Year's is a day of traditional hospitality, visiting and good cheer, mostly with a secular view, but there is no reason that this day, too, could not be sanctified in Christ.



- [Day Eight activity](#) (*New Year's Day Party*)
- [Day Eight recipe](#) (*New Year's Pretzel*)

Daily Readings for: [January 01, 2021](#) (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: O God, who through the fruitful virginity of Blessed Mary bestowed on the human race the grace of eternal salvation, grant, we pray, that we may experience the intercession of her, through whom we were found worthy to receive the author of life, our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Silvesterpunsch](#) (Sylvester Punch)
- [Almond Pretzels](#)
- [Basilopitta](#)
- [Black Bun](#)
- [Children's Punch](#)
- [Eggnog I](#)
- [Eggnog II](#)
- [Eggnog III \(Spanish\)](#)

- Glögg
- Glögg—non-alcoholic American Style
- God Cakes
- Initial Cookies
- Jellied Pineapple Salad
- Lemon Wafers
- Mexican Wedding Cookies
- New Year Cookies
- New Year's Cake
- New Year's Day Refreshments
- New Year's Dinner Menu
- New Year's Eve Punch
- New Year's Eve: Midnight Buffet Menu
- New Year's Kranz
- New Year's Pretzel
- New Year's Pretzel
- New Year's Rolls
- Oliebollen I
- Oliebollen II
- Roast Beef and Individual Yorkshire Puddings
- Roast Suckling Pig
- Rum Rolls
- Scotch Shortbread
- Scripture Cake I
- Seed Cake
- Snow Balls
- Sweet Potato-Coconut Dessert
- Vasilopita I

- Vasilopita II
- Vasilopitta
- Wassail Bowl

ACTIVITIES

- Celebrating the Feasts of the Blessed Virgin
- Christmas and the Eucharist
- Christmas Play
- Day Eight ~ Activities for New Year's Day
- Family and Friends of Jesus Scrapbook Album
- Feasts of Mary in the Family
- Feasts of Our Lady in the Home
- Hymn: Child Jesus So Dear
- Marian Hymn: 'Tis Said of Our Dear Lady
- Marian Hymn: A Single Branch Three Roses Bore
- Marian Hymn: Ave Maria Dear
- Marian Hymn: Beautiful, Glorious
- Marian Hymn: Lourdes Hymn or Immaculate Mary
- Marian Hymn: Mary the Dawn
- Marian Hymn: Salve Regina
- Marian Hymn: Stella Matutina
- Marian Hymn: Virgin Blessed, Thou Star the Fairest
- Mary Garden
- New Year's Day Ceremony
- New Year's Day, Honoring Godparents
- New Year's Eve Activities
- New Year's Eve and New Year's Day
- New Year's Eve Family Celebration

- New Year's Eve Party
- New Year's Family Resolutions
- New Year's Visit
- Pomander
- Song for the New Year
- The Role of Woman as Mother
- What is a Nameday?

PRAYERS

- Christmas Morning Prayers
- Christmas Evening Prayers
- Christmas Table Blessing 1
- Christmas Table Blessing 2
- Christmas Table Blessing 3
- Christmas Table Blessing 4
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas Season (2nd Plan)
- Litany of the Blessed Virgin Mary (Litany of Loreto)
- New Year's Prayer for Church and State
- Blessing for the New Year
- Veni, Creator Spiritus
- Prayer for Peace
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas (1st Plan)
- St. Cyril of Alexandria's Litany of Praise of the Mother of God
- Table Blessing for the Feasts of the Mother of God

LIBRARY

- None

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2021-01-01>

Christmas: January 2nd

Memorials of St. Basil the Great and St. Gregory Nazianzen, bishops and doctors

Old Calendar: Holy Name of Jesus

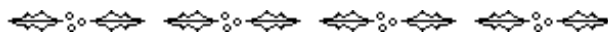
Today the Church celebrates the memorial of St. Basil the Great and St. Gregory Nazianzen, bishops and doctors. This is the ninth day of the Christmas season.

St. Basil was a brilliant student born of a Christian family in Caesarea, Cappadocia (Turkey). For some years, he followed the monastic way of life. He vigorously fought the Arian heresy. He became Bishop of Caesarea in 370. The monks of the Eastern Church today still follow the monastic rules which he set down.

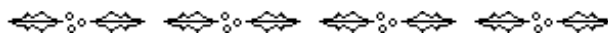


St. Gregory was also from Cappadocia. A friend of Basil, he too followed the monastic way of life for some years. He was ordained priest and in 381 became Bishop of Constantinople. It was during this period when the Arian heresy was at its height. He was called “The Theologian” because of his great learning and talent for oratory.

St. Basil is celebrated on June 14 and St. Gregory on May 9 in the 1962 Missal.



According to the 1962 Missal of St. John XXIII the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite today is the feast of the [Holy Name of Jesus](#). In a *Motu Proprio* dated October 23, 1913, Pope St. Pius X moved this Feast to the Sunday between January 2-5, or January 2 if none of these days is a Sunday.



St. Basil the Great and St. Gregory Nazianzen - Day Nine

Although New Year's Day is not celebrated by the Church,

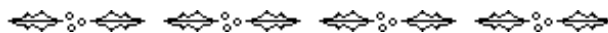


this day has been observed as a holy day of obligation since early times due to the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God. Each family and country has different traditional foods to eat on New Year's Day, with lentils being the main superstition: ill luck befalling those who do not eat lentils at the beginning of the year.



New Year's is a day of traditional hospitality, visiting and good cheer, mostly with a secular view, but there is no reason that this day, too, could not be sanctified in Christ.

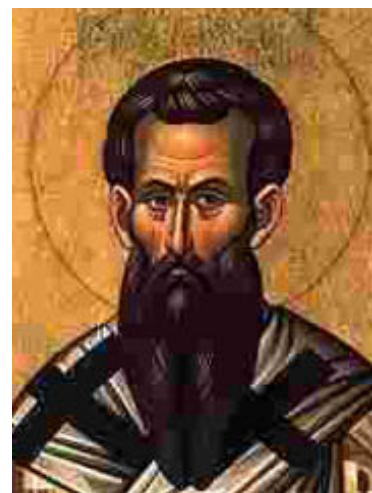
- [Day Nine activity](#) (*Blessing of the Bread of St. Basil*)
- [Day Nine recipe](#) (*St. Basil's Day Bread*)



St. Basil

St. Basil was born about 330, the oldest of four sons; three of his brothers became bishops, one of whom was St. Gregory of Nyssa. His pious grandmother Macrina exercised a great influence upon his religious education: "Never shall I forget the deep impression that the words and example of this venerable woman made upon my soul." Between St. Basil and St. Gregory of Nazianzen an intimate friendship existed from youth to old age. Of Western monasticism St. Benedict was the father and founder, of Eastern monasticism, St. Basil.

As bishop, Basil was a courageous and heroic champion of the Catholic faith against the Arian heresy. In 372 Emperor Valens sent Modestus, the prefect, to Cappadocia to introduce Arianism as the state religion. Modestus approached the holy bishop, upbraided him for his teaching, and threatened despoliation, exile, martyrdom, and death. To these words of the Byzantine despot, Basil replied with the peace of divine faith: "Is that all? Nothing of what you mentioned touches me. We possess nothing, we can be robbed of nothing. Exile will be impossible, since



everywhere on God's earth I am at home. Torments cannot afflict me, for I have no body. And death is welcome, for it will bring me more quickly to God. To a great extent I am already dead; for a long time I have been hastening to the grave." Astonished, the prefect remarked: "Till today no one has ever spoken to me so courageously." "Perhaps," rejoined Basil, "you have never before met a bishop." Modestus hastened back to Valens. "Emperor," he said, "we are bested by this leader of the Church. He is too strong for threats, too firm for words, too clever for persuasion."

Basil was a strong character, a burning lamp during his time. But as the fire from this lamp illumined and warmed the world, it consumed itself; as the saint's spiritual stature grew, his body wasted away, and at the early age of forty-nine his appearance was that of an old man. In every phase of ecclesiastical activity he showed superior talent and zeal. He was a great theologian, a powerful preacher, a gifted writer, the author of two rules for monastic life, a reformer of the Oriental liturgy. He died in 379, hardly forty-nine years old, yet so emaciated that only skin and bones remained, as though he had stayed alive in soul alone.

Patron: Cappadocia; hospital administrators; reformers; Russia.

Symbols: Supernatural fire, often with a dove present.



St. Gregory Nazianzen

Gregory, surnamed the "Theologian" by the Greeks, was born at Nazianz in Cappadocia in 339. He was one of the "Three Lights of the Church from Cappadocia." To his mother, St. Nonna, is due the foundation for his saintly life as an adult. He was educated at the most famous schools of his time - Caesarea, Alexandria, Athens. At Athens he formed that storied bond of friendship with St. Basil which was still flaming with all the fervor of youthful enthusiasm when he delivered the funeral oration at the grave of his friend in 381.



Gregory was baptized in 360, and for a while lived the quiet life of a hermit. In 372 he was consecrated bishop by St. Basil. At the urgent wish of Gregory, his father and

bishop of Nazianz, he assisted him in the care of souls. In 381 he accepted the see of Constantinople, but grieved by the constant controversies retired again to the quiet life he cherished so highly and dedicated himself entirely to contemplation.

During his life span the pendulum was continually swinging back and forth between contemplation and the active ministry. He longed for solitude, but the exigencies of the times called him repeatedly to do pastoral work and to participate in the ecclesiastical movements of the day. He was unquestionably one of the greatest orators of Christian antiquity; his many and great accomplishments were due in great measure to his exceptional eloquence. His writings have merited for him the title of “Doctor of the Church.”

Excerpted from *The Church's Year of Grace*, Pius Parsch.

Things to Do:

- We too must harmoniously combine the two phases of spiritual life, the contemplative which tends to solitude and the active or pastoral which responds to the need of the times and the good of souls.

Daily Readings for: [January 02, 2021](#) (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: O God, who were pleased to give light to your Church by the example and teaching of the Bishops Saints Basil and Gregory, grant, we pray, that in humility we may learn your truth and practice it faithfully in charity. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Basilopitta](#)
- [Candied Orange Peel](#)

- Candy Cream Apricots
- Cherries Jubilee II
- Glaceed Fruits
- Glow Wine
- Jiffy On-Fire Dessert
- New Year's Cake
- Nut-Topped Dates
- Snowballs on Fire
- Stuffed Prunes
- Sugarplums
- Vasilopita I
- Vasilopita II
- Vasilopitta

ACTIVITIES

- Christmas and the Eucharist
- Christmas Play
- Day Nine ~ Activities for the Feast of St. Basil and St. Gregory
- Namedays
- Teaching About Selfishness
- What is a Nameday?

PRAYERS

- Christmas Morning Prayers
- Christmas Evening Prayers
- Christmas Table Blessing 1
- Christmas Table Blessing 2

- Christmas Table Blessing 3
- Christmas Table Blessing 4
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas Season (2nd Plan)
- Blessing of the Vasilopita or Bread of Saint Basil
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas (1st Plan)

LIBRARY

- Sacramentum Caritatis | Pope Benedict XVI
- Saint Basil | Pope Benedict XVI
- St. Basil - Part 2 | Pope Benedict XVI
- St. Basil The Great | Eric J. Scheske
- The Saintly Scholars of the Church | Fr. Stephen McKenna

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

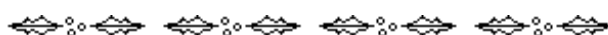
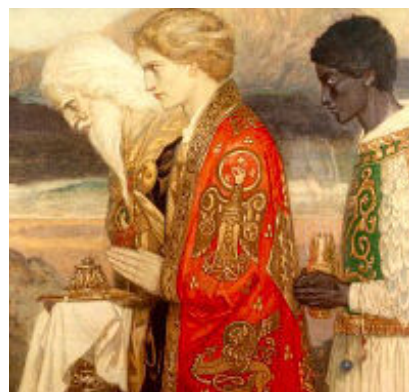
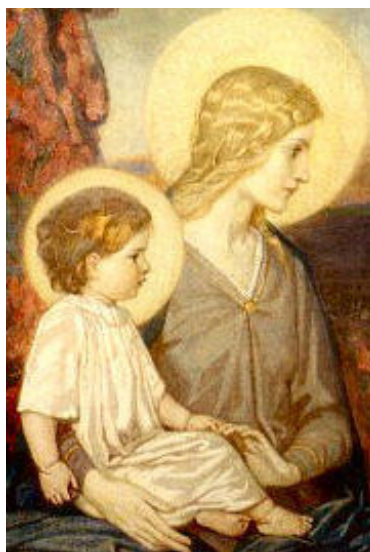
<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2021-01-02>

Christmas: January 3rd

The Epiphany of the Lord

Old Calendar: The Most Holy Name of Jesus

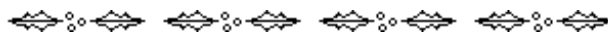
Today the Church celebrates the Solemnity of the Epiphany. “The Lord and ruler is coming; kingship is his, and government and power.” With these words, the Church proclaims that today’s feast brings to a perfect fulfillment all the purposes of Advent. Epiphany, therefore, marks the liturgical zenith of the Advent-Christmas season. — *Pius Parsch*



The Solemnity of the Epiphany is celebrated either on January 6 or, according to the decision of the episcopal conference, on the Sunday between January 2 and January 8. The young Messiah is revealed as the light of the nations. Yet, as the antiphon for the *Magnificat* at Second Vespers reminds us, three mysteries are encompassed in this solemnity: the adoration of the Christ Child by the Magi, the Baptism of Christ and the wedding feast at Cana. Extra candles and/or lamps may be placed around the sanctuary and in other parts of the church to honor Christ revealed as the Light of the Gentiles (*Ceremonial of Bishops*). It is customary to replace the images of the shepherds at the crib with the three Magi and their gifts. — *Ceremonies of the Liturgical Year*, Msgr. Peter J. Elliott, Ignatius Press.

The feast of [Holy Name of Jesus](#), which is ordinarily celebrated today, is superseded

by the Sunday liturgy.

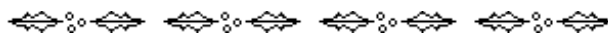


The feast of the Epiphany, which was kept in the East and in certain Western Churches before being observed in Rome, seems to have been originally a feast of the nativity; January 6, for those churches where it was kept, was the equivalent of Christmas (December 25) in the Roman Church. The feast was introduced at Rome in the second half of the sixth century and became the complement and, so to say, the crown of the Christmas festival.



Epiphany means manifestation. What the Church celebrates today is the manifestation of our Lord to the whole world; after being made known to the shepherds of Bethlehem He is revealed to the Magi who have come from the East to adore Him. Christian tradition has ever seen in the Magi the first fruits of the Gentiles; they lead in their wake all the peoples of the earth, and thus the Epiphany is an affirmation of universal salvation. St. Leo brings out this point admirably in a sermon, read at Matins, in which he shows in the adoration of the Magi the beginnings of Christian faith, the time when the great mass of the heathen sets off to follow the star which summons it to seek its Saviour.

That is the meaning, too, of the wonderful prophecy from Isaias which the liturgy appoints to be read in the first nocturn at Matins and at the Epistle of the Mass. This same thought of universal redemption the Church returns to as she sings, in the antiphon to the Magnificat at 2nd Vespers, applying the words to herself, of the union with Christ typified by the wedding feast at Cana, by the baptism of her children foreshadowed by that of Christ in the waters of the Jordan. Formerly the Epiphany was an additional day for solemn baptisms.



Solemnity of the Epiphany - Day Twelve

Epiphany is a large celebration, especially in Spanish speaking

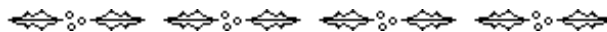


countries. Things look different around the household: the infant Jesus in the manger now has a small gold crown and is wearing regal robes. The figures of the wise men have reached Bethlehem, completing the nativity scene.



The Church extends itself on Epiphany to the homes of the faithful. The custom of blessing the home on this day probably originated from these words in the Gospel, “And entering into the house, they found the Child with Mary, His Mother, and falling down they adored Him.” The priest blesses the house if he can be present, but if not, the father of the family may do so.

- [Day Twelve activity](#) (*Epiphany Party*)
- [Day Twelve recipe](#) (*Twelfth Day Cake*)



According to the 1962 Missal of St. John XXIII the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite today is the feast of the [Holy Name of Jesus](#). In a *Motu Proprio* dated October 23, 1913, Pope St. Pius X moved this Feast to the Sunday between January 2-5, or January 2 if none of these days is a Sunday.

Daily Readings for: [January 03, 2021](#) (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: May the splendor of your majesty, O Lord, we pray, shed its light upon our hearts, that we may pass through the shadows of this world and reach the brightness of our eternal home. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Cappelletti all'uso di Romagna](#) (Soup with Little Hats)

- *Mostarda di Cremona* (Fruited Mustard)
- *Paté de Noel* (Christmas Pie)
- Brazilian King's Bread
- Candied Fruit Peel—Epiphany Gift
- Dutch King's Bread
- Epiphany Bread
- Fave dei Morti II
- Fireside Punch
- Fresh Tomato Sauce
- Galette des Rois
- Gateau des Rois (1)
- Gateau des Rois (2)
- Insalata di Rinforzo
- King Cake (New Orleans' Style)
- King's Ring
- Kings' Bread Ring
- Lamb Pie with Poppy Seed Crust
- Lamb's Wool I
- Lamb's Wool II
- Lamb's Wool III
- Lamb's Wool IV
- Little Hats Cappelletti
- Little Mince Pies
- Rosca de Reyes
- Spanish King's Bread
- Spanish King's Cake
- Twelfth Night Bread I
- Twelfth Night Bread II

- Twelfth Night Bread of Lady Carcas
- Twelfth Night Cake I
- Twelfth Night Cake II
- Twelfth Night Cake III
- Twelfth Night Cake IV
- King's Cake

ACTIVITIES

- A Children's Party for Twelfth Night
- A Christmas Play
- An Epiphany Drama
- Carnival or Mardi Gras
- Celebrating the Feast of the Epiphany
- Christmas and the Eucharist
- Christmas at Home and in the Liturgy
- Day Twelve ~ Activities for the Feast of Epiphany
- Day Twelve ~ Activities for the Twelfth Day of Christmas
- Enthroning the Crib for Epiphany
- Epiphany Cake Tradition
- Epiphany Crib Scene Figures
- Epiphany Feast Suggestions
- Epiphany Home Blessing Ceremony
- Epiphany Mass
- Epiphany Mass in an Eastern Rite
- Epiphany of Our Lord
- Epiphany Plays for the Family and Community
- Explanation of Epiphany, or the Manifestation of the Lord

- Family and Friends of Jesus Scrapbook Album
- Giving of Presents
- Kings' Party or Twelfth Night Party
- Living the Liturgy in the Home for Advent and Christmas
- Meaning of Epiphany
- Posters for Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany
- Singing and Acting
- The Feasts of Light: Christmas, Epiphany and Candlemas
- The Wise Men, An Epiphany Legend
- Tradition of the Epiphany Mystery Play
- Twelfth Night Cake And Kings Tradition

PRAYERS

- Roman Ritual: Blessing of Chalk on Epiphany
- Blessing of the Home on Epiphany
- Procession to the Royal Crib on Epiphany
- Christmas Morning Prayers
- Christmas Evening Prayers
- Epiphany Prayers for the Home (without Home Blessing)
- Summary of Epiphany Blessings from the Roman Ritual
- Christmas Table Blessing 1
- Christmas Table Blessing 2
- Christmas Table Blessing 3
- Christmas Table Blessing 4
- Book of Blessings: Blessing of a Christmas Tree
- Book of Blessings: Blessing of Homes During the Christmas and Easter Seasons
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas Season

(2nd Plan)

- Epiphany Home Blessing
- Book of Blessings: Blessing of the Christmas Tree for the Home (Shorter Rite)
- Epiphany Prayer from Mozarabic Breviary
- Epiphany Prayer - 2 from Mozarabic Breviary
- Roman Ritual: Blessing of Gold, Incense, and Myrrh on Epiphany
- Roman Ritual: Blessing of Homes on Epiphany
- Roman Ritual: Blessing of Water on Eve of Epiphany
- Roman Ritual: Litany of the Saints
- Epiphany Home Blessing Ceremony
- Epiphany Meal Blessing
- Solemn Announcing of Movable Feastdays on Epiphany
- Roman Ritual: Blessing of Eggs

LIBRARY

- Be An Epiphany Of Christ, Of His Merciful Love | Pope Saint John Paul II
- Benedict XVI Homily for Feast of the Epiphany 2011 | Pope Benedict XVI
- Epiphany Celebrates Church's Catholicity | Pope Saint John Paul II
- The Epiphany of the Lord | Kilian J. Hennrich O.F.M., Cap., A.M.

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2021-01-03>

Christmas: January 4th

Memorial of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, religious

Born in New York, Elizabeth Seton married and became a mother of five children. After her husband's death, she converted to Catholicism and founded the American Sisters of Charity, a community of teaching sisters which began Catholic schools throughout the United States, especially helping with the education of underprivileged children. Mother Seton laid the foundation of the American parochial school system and was the first native-born American to be canonized.



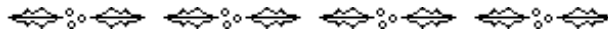
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton - Day Eleven

Elizabeth Seton was born on August 28, 1774, of a wealthy and distinguished Episcopalian family. She was baptized in the Episcopal faith and was a faithful adherent of the Episcopal Church until her conversion to Catholicism.

She established her first Catholic school in Baltimore in 1808; in 1809, she established a religious community in Emmitsburg, Maryland. After seeing the expansion of her small community of teaching sisters to New York and as far as St. Louis, she died on January 4, 1821, and was declared a saint by Pope Paul VI on September 14, 1975. She is the first native born American to be canonized a saint.



- [Day Eleven activity](#) (*Story Time*)
- [Day Eleven recipe](#) (*Colonial Wassail*)



St. Elizabeth Ann Seton

This wife, mother and foundress of a religious congregation was born Elizabeth Ann Bayley on August 28, 1774 in New York City, the daughter of an eminent physician and professor at what is now Columbia University. Brought up as an Episcopalian, she received an excellent education, and from her early years she manifested an unusual concern for the poor.

In 1794 Elizabeth married William Seton, with whom she had five children. The loss of their fortune so affected William's health that in 1803 Elizabeth and William went to stay with Catholic friends at Livorno, Italy. William died six weeks after their arrival, and when Elizabeth returned to New York City some six months later, she was already a convinced Catholic. She met with stern opposition from her Episcopalian friends but was received into full communion with the Catholic Church on March 4, 1805.

Abandoned by her friends and relatives, Elizabeth was invited by the superior of the Sulpicians in Baltimore to found a school for girls in that city. The school prospered, and eventually the Sulpician superior, with the approval of Bishop Carroll, gave Elizabeth and her assistants a rule of life. They were also permitted to make religious profession and to wear a religious habit.



In 1809 Elizabeth moved her young community to Emmitsburg, Maryland, where she adopted as a rule of life an adaptation of the rule observed by the Sisters of Charity, founded by St. Vincent de Paul. Although she did not neglect the ministry to the poor, and especially to Negroes, she actually laid the foundation for what became the American parochial school system. She trained teachers and prepared textbooks for use in the schools; she also opened orphanages in Philadelphia and New York City.

She died at Emmitsburg on January 4, 1821, was beatified by Pope John XXIII in 1963, and was canonized by Pope Paul VI in 1975.

Excerpted from *Saints of the Roman Calendar* by Enzo Lodi

Patron: Death of children; in-law problems; loss of parents; opposition of Church authorities; people ridiculed for their piety; Diocese of Shreveport, Louisiana; widows.

Things to Do:

- Meditate on these words of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, "What was the first rule of

our dear Savior's life? You know it was to do His Father's will. Well, then, the first end I propose in our daily work is to do the will of God; secondly to do it in the manner He wills; and thirdly, to do it because it is His will. I know what is His will by those who direct me; whatever they bid me do, if it is ever so small in itself, is the will of God for me. Then, do it in the manner He wills it."

Daily Readings for: January 04, 2021 **(Readings on USCCB website)**

Collect: O God, who crowned with the gift of true faith Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton's burning zeal to find you, grant by her intercession and example that we may always seek you with diligent love and find you in daily service with sincere faith. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Wassail \(Colonial\)](#)

ACTIVITIES

- [Christmas and the Eucharist](#)
- [Christmas Play](#)
- [Day Eleven ~ Activities for the Eleventh Day in the Octave of Christmas](#)
- [Religion in the Home for Elementary School: January](#)
- [Religion in the Home for Preschool: January](#)

PRAYERS

- [Christmas Morning Prayers](#)
- [Christmas Evening Prayers](#)

- Christmas Table Blessing 1
- Christmas Table Blessing 2
- Christmas Table Blessing 3
- Christmas Table Blessing 4
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas Season (2nd Plan)
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas (1st Plan)

LIBRARY

- Right From the Start: John Carroll, Our First Bishop | Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan
- Spirituality for Widows | Ronda Chervin Ph.D.

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2021-01-04>

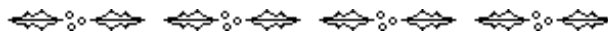
Christmas: January 5th

Memorial of St. John Neumann, bishop (USA)

Old Calendar: St. Telesphorus, pope and martyr

John Nepomucene Neumann was born in Bohemia. While in the seminary he felt a desire to help in the American missions. After coming to the United States he was ordained in New York in 1836. Entering the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer, he worked in establishing parishes and parish schools. In 1852 he was consecrated Bishop of Philadelphia and prescribed the Forty Hours devotion.

According to the 1962 Missal of St. John XXIII the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite, today is the feast of St. Telesphorus, pope and martyr. According to St. Irenaeus, St. Telesphorus, who governed the Church from 126 to 136 during a period of violent persecution, suffered martyrdom for the faith.



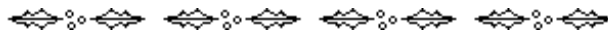
St. John Neumann - Day Twelve

John Neumann was born in Bohemia on March 20, 1811. Since he had a great desire to dedicate himself to the American missions, he came to the United States as a cleric and was ordained in New York in 1836 by Bishop Dubois.

In 1840, John Neumann entered the Congregation of the Most Holy Redeemer (Redemptorists). He labored in Ohio, Pennsylvania and Maryland. In 1852, he was consecrated bishop of Philadelphia. There he worked hard for the establishment of parish schools and for the erection of many parishes for the numerous immigrants. Bishop Neumann died on January 5, 1860; he was beatified in 1963.



- [Day Twelve activity](#) (*Visit to the Blessed Sacrament*)
- [Day Twelve recipe](#) (*Vanocka*)

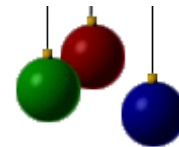


St. John Neumann

John Nepomucene Neumann was born on March 28, 1811, the third of six children of a stocking knitter and his wife in the village of Prachatitz in Bohemia. From his mother he acquired the spirit of piety and through her encouragement entered the Seminary at Budweis.

During his seminary years, he yearned to be a foreign missionary in America. He left his native land and was ordained in June, 1836 by Bishop John Dubois in New York. He spent four years in Buffalo and the surrounding area building churches and establishing schools.

In 1840, he joined the Redemptorists. Eight years later he became a United States citizen. By order of Pope Pius IX in 1852 he was consecrated fourth Bishop of Philadelphia. His mastery of eight languages proved extremely helpful in his quest for souls. He was a pioneer promoter of the Parochial School System in America.



One of the highlights of Saint John Neumann's life was his participation, in Rome, in the Proclamation of the Dogma of our Blessed Mother's Immaculate Conception. Through his efforts, the Forty Hours Devotion was introduced in the Philadelphia Diocese. He founded the first church in America for Italian-speaking people. He also founded the Glen Riddle group of the Sisters of the Third Order of St. Francis.

At 48 years of age, completely exhausted from all his apostolic endeavors, he collapsed in the street on January 5, 1860. He is buried beneath the altar of the lower Church in St. Peter's Church in Philadelphia.

Things to Do:

- Read more about the life of [St. John Neumann](#) here.
- If you live close to Philadelphia or are passing through visit the [Shrine of St. John Neumann](#).

- Learn more about the [Redemptorist Order](#).



St. Telesphorus

St. Telesphorus was Greek, probably from Calabria. He was the seventh Roman bishop in succession from the Apostles. He celebrated Easter on Sunday but maintained fellowship with communities that did not. He started the tradition of Christmas Midnight Mass, and decided that the Gloria should be sung. Some legends say he was a hermit before his election, and that he instituted the tradition of Lent, but these are doubtful. According to St. Irenaeus, he was “an illustrious martyr”. His remains are interred in the Vatican.



Symbols: Pope with a chalice over which three Hosts hover (may refer to the celebration of Christmas with 3 Masses said to represent the temporal, spiritual, and eternal birth of Christ); pope with a chalice with a nearby club (possibly an indication of his martyrdom).

Daily Readings for: [January 05, 2021](#) (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: O God, who called the Bishop Saint John Neumann, renowned for his charity and pastoral service, to shepherd your people in America, grant by his intercession that, as we foster the Christian education of youth and are strengthened by the witness of brotherly love, we may constantly increase the family of your Church. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Galuschde \(Krautwickel, stuffed cabbage\)](#)

ACTIVITIES

- [Christmas and the Eucharist](#)
- [Christmas Play](#)
- [Humility and Detachment](#)
- [Namedays](#)
- [Teaching About Criticism](#)
- [What is a Nameday?](#)

PRAYERS

- [Christmas Morning Prayers](#)
- [Christmas Evening Prayers](#)
- [Christmas Table Blessing 1](#)
- [Christmas Table Blessing 2](#)
- [Christmas Table Blessing 3](#)
- [Christmas Table Blessing 4](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas Season \(2nd Plan\)](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas \(1st Plan\)](#)

LIBRARY

- [Blessed John Neumann, C.S.S.R.—Pastoral Bishop | Michael J. Curley C.S.S.R.](#)
- [St. John Neumann: Model for Priests | Rev. Daniel F. McSheffery](#)

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2021-01-05>

Christmas: January 6th

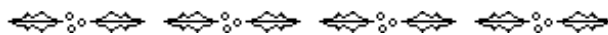
Wednesday Christmas Weekday; Optional Memorial of St. Andre Bessette, religious; Epiphany (traditional)

Old Calendar: Epiphany of Our Lord

St. André was born near Quebec, and entered the Congregation of the Holy Cross as a Brother. He performed humble tasks for over forty years and entrusted all of the poor and sick who flocked to his cell to the care of St. Joseph. During his life he was able to have a chapel built to the spouse of the Virgin Mary. After his death, the shrine grew into the great basilica known as St. Joseph's Oratory in Montreal.

According to the 1962 Missal of St. John XXIII the Extraordinary Form of the Roman Rite, today is the feast of the Epiphany of Our Lord.

According to the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB) calendar, the Optional Memorial of St Andre Bessette is celebrated in Canada not on January 6 but on January 7.



Bl. Andre Bessette - Day Thirteen

Brother André spent most of his days in a narrow lodge, with only a table, some chairs and a bench as furnishings. He was attentive to the needs of all, smiling, obliging. In the evening he would engage in the difficult work of maintaining the parlor and hallway floors. He was on his knees until late at night, washing,

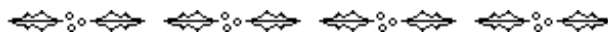


polishing, and waxing by the dim light of a candle. — *Abbey of Saint-Joseph de Clairval*



The use of candles is one of the loveliest Christmas customs that we can keep on using throughout the year. Now, more than ever, Christmas is a festival of light in a dark world, a time to hold our candles high, and to teach our children all the little ceremonies which make life gracious and full of meaning. No matter how long we live, nor how learned we become, we may travel the world over, and find nothing more beautiful than candlelight on the face of a child. “Now the Lord be thanked because we have light.” — *Dorothy Albaugh Stickell*

- [Day Thirteen Activity](#) (*Candles for the Domestic Church*)
- [Day Fourteen Recipe](#) (*Yule Spice Cake*)



St. André Bessette

Brother André expressed a saint's faith by a lifelong devotion to Saint Joseph.

Sickness and weakness dogged André from birth. He was the eighth of twelve children born to a French Canadian couple near Montreal. Adopted at twelve, when both parents had died, he became a farmhand. Various trades followed: shoemaker, baker, blacksmith—all failures. He was a factory worker in the United States during the boom times of the Civil War.

At twenty-five, he applied for entrance into the Congregation of the Holy Cross. After a year's novitiate, he was not admitted because of his weak health. But with an extension and the urging of Bishop Bourget (see Marie-Rose Durocher, October 6), he was finally received. He was given the humble job of doorkeeper at Notre Dame College in Montreal, with additional duties as sacristan, laundry worker and messenger. “When I joined this community, the superiors showed me the door, and I remained forty years.”

In his little room near the door, he spent much of the night on his knees. On his windowsill, facing Mount Royal, was a small statue of Saint Joseph, to whom he had been devoted since childhood. When asked about it he said, “Some day, Saint Joseph is going to be honored in a very special way on Mount Royal!”



When he heard someone was ill, he visited to bring cheer and to pray with the sick person. He would rub the sick person lightly with oil taken from a lamp burning in the college chapel. Word of healing powers began to spread.

When an epidemic broke out at a nearby college, André volunteered to nurse. Not one person died. The trickle of sick people to his door became a flood. His superiors were uneasy; diocesan authorities were suspicious; doctors called him a quack. “I do not cure,” he said again and again. “Saint Joseph cures.” In the end he needed four secretaries to handle the eighty thousand letters he received each year.

For many years the Holy Cross authorities had tried to buy land on Mount Royal. Brother André and others climbed the steep hill and planted medals of Saint Joseph. Suddenly, the owners yielded. André collected two hundred dollars to build a small chapel and began receiving visitors there—smiling through long hours of listening, applying Saint Joseph’s oil. Some were cured, some not. The pile of crutches, canes and braces grew.

The chapel also grew. By 1931 there were gleaming walls, but money ran out. “Put a statue of Saint Joseph in the middle. If he wants a roof over his head, he’ll get it.” The magnificent Oratory on Mount Royal took fifty years to build. The sickly boy who could not hold a job died at ninety.

He is buried at the Oratory and was beatified in 1982. On December 19, 2009, Pope Benedict XVI promulgated a decree recognizing a second miracle at Blessed André’s intercession and on October 17, 2010, Pope Benedict XVI formally declared sainthood for Blessed André. — *Saint of the Day*, Leonard Foley, O.F.M.

Things to Do:

- Read more about the [life of St. André](#).
- Learn more about the [Holy Cross Brothers](#), the order of which Bl. André was a member. Pray for an increase in vocations and for those who are already living the religious life.
- If you live close to [St. Joseph’s Oratory of Mount Royal](#), make a pilgrimage. If that’s not possible make a virtual pilgrimage.
- Say a prayer for the sick who were so dear to the heart of Brother André.
- Try the recipes offered to sample authentic French Canadian food.

Commentary for the Readings in the Extraordinary Form: Epiphany

“There came Magi from the East to Jerusalem, saying, ‘Where is the newly born King of the Jews?... We have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him’” (Gospel).

Epiphany means “an apparition, or manifestation” of God becoming visible to the Gentile world. Today Jesus manifests a new “kingdom” (Introit), to which the star-light of “faith” guides all wise men (Prayer).

The Epistle is a revealing picture of the “darkness” of the Jewish Old Testament; a prophecy also of the “brightness” of Christ shining in a world where men may now “see.”

The Gospel tells of the faith of the “Magik” divinely guided by the “star”; how this faith manifested itself in action by their seeking instruction from God’s priests, by prostrating their very beings and offering their best treasures before the frail Babe in Mary’s arms: God in homage to His new Kingship, symbol of their *hearts* offering love; Incense in homage to His Divinity, symbol of their *minds* offering adoration; Myrrh in homage to His Humanity, symbol of their *bodies* offering to do penance.

A truly great Feast! “Arise, be enlightened” (Epistle).

— Excerpted from *My Sunday Missal*, Confraternity of the Precious Blood



Daily Readings for: January 06, 2021 (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: Lord our God, friend of the lowly, who gave your servant, Saint Andre Bessette, a great devotion to Saint Joseph and a special commitment to the poor and afflicted, help us through his intercession to follow his example of prayer and love and so come to share with him in your glory. Through our Lord Jesus Christ,

your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- *Cappelletti all'uso di Romagna* (Soup with Little Hats)
- Candied Fruit Peel—Epiphany Gift
- Galette des Rois
- King Cake (New Orleans' Style)
- Maple Tourlouche (Upside Down Cake)
- Tourtière (Meat Pie)
- Twelfth Night Cake III
- Twelfth Night Cake IV

ACTIVITIES

- Carnival or Mardi Gras
- Christmas and the Eucharist
- Day Thirteen ~ Activities for the Thirteenth Day of Christmas
- Enthroning the Crib for Epiphany
- Epiphany Crib Scene Figures
- Epiphany Home Blessing Ceremony
- Explanation of Epiphany, or the Manifestation of the Lord
- Posters for Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany
- Pre-Lent and Carnival
- Pre-Lent, or Carnival in the Home
- Singing and Acting
- St. Joseph's Oil
- The Echo Yodel
- The Feasts of Light: Christmas, Epiphany and Candlemas

- Tradition of the Epiphany Mystery Play
- Turkey in the Straw
- Twelfth Night Cake And Kings Tradition
- What is a Nameday?

PRAYERS

- Roman Ritual: Blessing of Chalk on Epiphany
- Blessing of the Home on Epiphany
- Procession to the Royal Crib on Epiphany
- Prayer for Vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life
- Prayer for a Sick Person
- Epiphany Prayers for the Home (without Home Blessing)
- Summary of Epiphany Blessings from the Roman Ritual
- Christmas Table Blessing 1
- Christmas Table Blessing 2
- Christmas Table Blessing 3
- Christmas Table Blessing 4
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas Season (2nd Plan)
- Epiphany Home Blessing
- St. Joseph Prayer for protection
- Epiphany Prayer from Mozarabic Breviary
- Epiphany Prayer - 2 from Mozarabic Breviary
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas (1st Plan)
- Roman Ritual: Blessing of Gold, Incense, and Myrrh on Epiphany
- Epiphany Home Blessing Ceremony
- Epiphany Meal Blessing
- Solemn Announcing of Movable Feastdays on Epiphany

LIBRARY

- [Blessed Brother Andre Bessette, C.S.C.: The Miracle Man of Montreal | Unknown](#)

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2021-01-06>

Christmas: January 7th

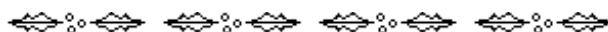
Thursday Christmas Weekday; Optional Memorial of St. Raymond of Penafort, priest; St. Andre Bessette, religious (Can)

Old Calendar: Feria

Born in Barcelona, Spain, St. Raymond of Penafort was the third Superior-General of the Dominican Order. He is famous for his work in the freeing of slaves. He wrote five books of *Decretals* which are now a valuable part of the Canon Law of the Church. The *Summa Casuum*, which is about the correct and fruitful administration of the Sacrament of Penance, is the most notable of his works. In the 1962 Extraordinary Form Calendar, St. Raymond's feast is January 23.



The Church in Canada celebrates the feast of St. Andre Bessette today rather than on January 6 as in the United States.



St. Raymond of Penafort - Day Fourteen

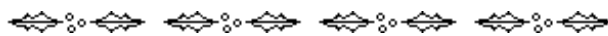
St. Raymond devoted much of his life to helping the poor. The famous incident which is recounted in the story of Raymond's life took place when he went with King James to Majorca. The King dismissed Raymond's request to return home. Relying on his faith and love of God, Raymond walked on the waves to his ship, spread his cloak to make a sail, made the sign of the cross then sailed to the distant harbor of Barcelona.



For St. Raymond's feast we should remember that,

“carolling and story telling belong to the whole Christmas season. Hospitality and giving to others also must continue if true Christmas joy is to remain. An outing to which friends are invited or a party that includes a round of carolling become perhaps even more appropriate with the approach of Epiphany.” — Excerpted from *The Twelve Days of Christmas*

- [Day Fourteen activity](#) (*Legend of the Little Girl*)
- [Day Fourteen recipe](#) (*Christstollen*)



St. Raymond of Penafort

The blessed Raymond was born at Barcelona, of the noble family of Penafort. Having been imbued with the rudiments of the Christian faith, the admirable gifts he had received, both of mind and body, were such that even when quite a boy he seemed to promise great things in his later life.

Whilst still young, he taught humanities in Barcelona. Later on, he went to Bologna, where he applied himself with much diligence to the exercises of a virtuous life, and to the study of canon and civil law. He there received the Doctor's cap, and interpreted the sacred canons so ably that he was the admiration of his hearers. The holiness of his life becoming known far and wide, Berengarius, the Bishop of Barcelona, when returning to his diocese from Rome, visited Bologna in order to see him; and after most earnest entreaties, induced Raymond to accompany him to Barcelona. He was shortly after made Canon and Provost of that Church, and became a model to the clergy and people by his uprightness, modesty, learning and meekness. His tender devotion to the Holy Mother of God was extraordinary, and he never neglected an opportunity of zealously promoting the devotion and honor which are due to her.

When he was about forty-five years of age, he made his solemn profession in the Order of the Friars Preachers. He then, as a soldier but just entered into service, devoted himself to the exercise of every virtue, but above all to charity to the poor, and this mainly to the captives who had been taken by the infidels. It was by his exhortation that St Peter Nolasco (who was his penitent) was induced to devote all his riches to this work of most meritorious charity. The Blessed Virgin appeared to Peter, as also to



blessed Raymond and to James the First, King of Aragon, telling them that it would be exceedingly pleasing to herself and her divine Child, if an Order of Religious men were instituted whose mission it should be to deliver captives from the tyranny of infidels. Whereupon, after deliberating together, they founded the Order of our Lady of Mercy for the Ransom of Captives; and blessed Raymond drew up certain rules of life, which were admirably adapted to the spirit and vocation of the said Order. Some years after, he obtained their approbation from Gregory the Ninth, and made St Peter Nolasco, to whom he gave the habit with his own hands, first General of the Order.

Raymond was called to Rome by the same Pope, who appointed him to be his Chaplain, Penitentiary, and Confessor. It was by Gregory's order that he collected together, in the volume called the *Decretals*, the Decrees of the Roman Pontiffs, which were to be found separately in the various Councils and Letters. He was most resolute in refusing the Archbishopric of Tarragona, which the same Pontiff offered to him, and, of his own accord resigned the Generalship of the Dominican Order, which office he had discharged in a most holy manner for the space of two years. He persuaded James the King of Aragon to establish in his dominions the Holy Office of the Inquisition. He worked many miracles; among which is that most celebrated one of his having, when returning to Barcelona from the island of Majorca, spread his cloak upon the sea, and sailed upon it, in the space of six hours, the distance of a hundred and sixty miles, and having reached his convent, entered it through the closed doors. At length, when he had almost reached the hundredth year of his age, and was full of virtue and merit, he slept in the Lord, in the year of the Incarnation 1275. He was canonized by Pope Clement the Eighth.

Patron: Attorneys; barristers; canonists; lawyers; medical record librarians.

Things to Do:

- St. Raymond diligently studied Canon Law. Spend some time learning what are the [obligations and rights](#) of the laity under Church law.
- Learn more about the [Spanish Inquisition](#).
- St. Raymond contributed much to the understanding of the Sacrament of Penance. Make sure your family knows the Act of Contrition and says it every day.

Daily Readings for: [January 07, 2021](#) ([Readings on USCCB website](#))

Collect: O God, who adorned the Priest Saint Raymond with the virtue of outstanding mercy and compassion for sinners and for captives, grant us, through his intercession, that, released from slavery to sin, we may carry out in freedom of spirit what is pleasing to you. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Flan](#)
- [Flan](#)
- [Paella I](#)
- [Paella II](#)

ACTIVITIES

- [Christmas and the Eucharist](#)
- [Day Fourteen ~ Activities for the Fourteenth Day of Christmas](#)
- [Namedays](#)
- [What is a Nameday?](#)

PRAYERS

- [Christmas Table Blessing 1](#)
- [Christmas Table Blessing 2](#)
- [Christmas Table Blessing 3](#)
- [Christmas Table Blessing 4](#)

- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas Season (2nd Plan)
- Prelates, Kings and Peoples of the Earth!
- Act of Contrition
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas (1st Plan)

LIBRARY

- Doctrines of Dominican Theology | J. A. McHugh O.P., S.T.M., Litt.,D.

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2021-01-07>

Christmas: January 8th

Friday Christmas Weekday

The Magi are called “saints” for the first time in the writings of Archbishop Hildebert of Tours (1133). In the twelfth century their veneration spread over all of Europe. The authorities of the Church did not prohibit this cult, and Epiphany acquired the popular name of “Feast of the Three Holy Kings” in most countries of Europe.

The name Magi is not a Hebrew word, but of Indo-European origin, and means “great, illustrious.” Saint Matthew mentioned the term without explanation because it was well known to the people of Palestine. The Magi originated in Media (Persia), and their caste later spread to other Oriental countries. They were a highly esteemed class of priestly scholars, devoting themselves not only to religion but also to the study of natural sciences, medicine, mathematics, astronomy, and astrology. In several countries they were members of the king’s council.

Where did the Magi come from? Saint Matthew gives a general answer: “Wise men from the East.” In modern terms, it could have been from any one of the countries of Arabia, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, or India. It has never been exactly determined from which of these countries they came.

Quite early in the Christian era a popular tradition conferred on them the title of “kings.” This tradition became universal at the end of the sixth century. It was based on Biblical prophecies which described the conversion of the pagans and, although not referring to the Magi, were applied to their visit:



The kings of Tharsis and the islands shall offer presents: the kings of the Arabians and of Sheba shall bring gifts. (Psalms 71, 10) The kings shall walk in the brightness of thy rising.... They all shall come from Sheba, bringing gold and frankincense. (Isaiah 60, 3-6)

The Gospel does not tell us how many they were. The Christians in the Orient had an old tradition of twelve Magi. In early paintings and mosaics they are represented as two, three, four, and even more. In the occidental Church a slowly spreading tradition put their number at three. It does not seem to have any historical foundation, but was probably based on the fact of the threefold presents. Another reason for the number three was the early legend that they represented all humanity in its three great races. Thus one of them was pictured as a member of the black race, and this choice seemed to be confirmed by the Bible:

Let the great ones come forth from Egypt, let Ethiopia stretch out her arms to God. (Psalms 67, 32)

The book *Collectanea et Flores*, ascribed to Saint Bede the Venerable (735), records an earlier legend of their names and appearance:

The first was called Melchior; he was an old man, with white hair and long beard; he offered gold to the Lord as to his king.

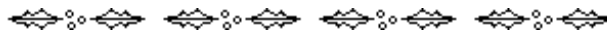
The second, Gaspar by name, young, beardless, of ruddy hue, offered to Jesus his gift of incense, the homage due to Divinity.

The third, of black complexion, with heavy beard, was called Baltasar; the myrrh he held in his hands prefigured the death of the Son of man.



There is an old legend that when many years had passed the Magi were visited by Saint Thomas the Apostle, who, after instructing them in Christianity, baptized them. They were then ordained to the priesthood and made bishops. It is said that once more the star of Bethlehem appeared to them and reunited them toward the end of their lives. "The city of Sewa in the Orient" is given as the place of their burial.

The legendary relics of the Magi were brought from Constantinople to Milan in the sixth century. In 1164 Emperor Frederick Barbarossa obtained them from the archbishop of Milan and transferred them to Cologne. Their shrine in Cologne was, and still is, the center of many pilgrimages.



Christmas Weekday - Day Fifteen

Dawn is the time of day in which the first rays of light begin to glimmer, to illumine and dispel the darkness... Christ's actual birth in Bethlehem shows forth the beautiful reality that God works with things according to their nature. Simply put, it makes perfect sense that a darkened world is tangibly illumined by divine, supernatural intervention upon the natural. — *Father Wade L. J. Menezes, CPM*



Candles are a symbol of Christ, the Light of the World.

The wax is regarded as typifying in a most appropriate way the flesh of Jesus Christ born of a virgin mother. From this has sprung the further conception that the wick symbolizes more particularly the soul of Jesus Christ and the flame the Divinity which absorbs and dominates both. — *Catholic Encyclopedia*

- [Day Fifteen activity](#) (*Mexican Christmas*)
- [Day Fifteen recipe](#) (*Little Mince Pies*)

Daily Readings for: January 08, 2021 (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: Cast your kindly light upon your faithful, Lord, we pray, and with the splendor of your glory set their hearts ever aflame, that they may never cease to acknowledge their Savior and may truly hold fast to him. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Little Mince Pies](#)

ACTIVITIES

- [Christmas and the Eucharist](#)
- [Day Fifteen ~ Activities for the Fifteenth Day of Christmas](#)

PRAYERS

- [Meal Prayers for the Christmas Season](#)
- [Christmas Table Blessing 1](#)
- [Christmas Table Blessing 2](#)
- [Christmas Table Blessing 3](#)
- [Christmas Table Blessing 4](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas Season \(2nd Plan\)](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas \(1st Plan\)](#)

LIBRARY

- [None](#)

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2021-01-08>

Christmas: January 9th

Saturday Christmas Weekday; Venerable Pauline-Marie Jaricot

Old Calendar: Sts. Julian and Basilissa, martyrs (Hist)

In 1818 a young French lay woman, Pauline Marie Jaricot, founded the Association for the Propagation of the Faith, officially recognized on 3 May 1822. Pauline is “the foundress of the largest aid agency for the missions in the entire history of the Catholic Church,” which later became the Society for the Propagation of the Faith and was conferred the title “Pontifical” by Pius XI in 1922. — Vatican website

She also was the foundress of the Association of the Living Rosary. She died on January 9, 1862 and was declared venerable on February 25, 1963. It is also the feast of Sts. Julian and Basilissa, husband and wife martyrs in the 4th century.



Christmas Weekday - Day Sixteen

St. Francis initiated the beautiful practice of displaying a Christmas crib or creche. He built it in a cave on a bleak mountain near the village of Greccio. News of what he was doing spread all over the countryside and a steady stream of men, women and children came by night carrying torches and candles to light their way.

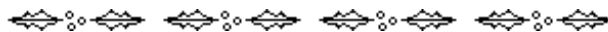
“It seemed like midday,” wrote someone who was there, “during that midnight filled with gladness for man and beast, and the crowds drawing near, so happy to be present for the



renewal of the eternal mystery.” Francis himself sang the Gospel story in a voice which was “strong and sweet and clear,” says the observer. “Then he preached to the people, most movingly, about the birth of the poor King in little Bethlehem.” —

Excerpted from *Christmas*

- [Day Sixteen activity](#) (*St. Francis and the Creche*)
- [Day Sixteen recipe](#) (*Double Chocolate Mocha Biscotti*)



Venerable Pauline-Marie Jaricot

Pauline Marie Jaricot was born to a very pious Catholic family in Lyons, France, July 22, 1799, and grew up dreaming of becoming a great missionary. Through her brother she developed a real concern for the Asian missions, and at age 17, she began to lead a life of unusual abnegation and self-sacrifice, and on Christmas Day, 1816, took a vow of perpetual virginity. At age 18, she composed a treatise on the *Infinite Love of the Divine Eucharist*.

In order to repair the sins of neglect and ingratitude committed against the Sacred Heart of Jesus, she established a union of prayer among pious servant girls, the members of which were known as the “Réparatrices du Sacré-Cœur de Jésus-Christ.”

During an extended visit to her married sister at Saint-Vallier (Drôme), she succeeded in effecting a complete transformation in the licentious lives of the numerous girls employed by her brother-in-law. It was among them and the “Réparatrices” that she first solicited offerings for the foreign missions. Her systematic organization of such collections dates back to 1819 when she asked each of her intimate friends to act as a promoter by finding ten associates willing to contribute one cent each week to the propagation of the Faith. One out of every ten promoters gathered the collections of their fellow-promoters; through a logical extension of this system, all the offerings were ultimately remitted to one central treasurer. The Society for the Propagation of Faith at its official foundation (3 May 1822) adopted this method, and easily triumphed over the opposition which had sought from the very start to thwart the realization of Pauline Jaricot’s plans.

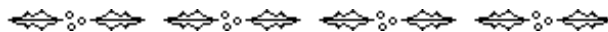
In 1826 she founded the Association of the Living Rosary. The fifteen decades of the Rosary were divided among fifteen associates, each of whom had to recite daily only one

determined decade. A second object of the new foundation was the spread of good books and articles of piety. An undertaking of Pauline's in the interest of social reform, though begun with prudence, involved her in considerable financial difficulties and ended in failure. She died on January 9, 1862 and was declared venerable on February 25, 1963.

Patron: Against poverty; impoverishment; poverty.

Things to Do:

- Read more about Pauline-Marie Jaricot [here](#) and [here](#).
- Read the [Letter](#) written by Pope John Paul II for the bicentenary of the birth of Ven. Pauline-Marie Jaricot.
- Learn more about [The Society for the Propagation of the Faith](#).
- Have your children offer extra prayers for the missions or make a small sacrifice for priests and nuns in mission countries.



Sts. Julian and Basilissa

St. Julian and St. Basilissa, though married, lived, by mutual consent, in perpetual chastity; they sanctified themselves by the most perfect exercises of an ascetic life, and employed their revenues in relieving the poor and the sick. For this purpose they converted their house into a kind of hospital, in which they sometimes entertained a thousand poor people.



Basilissa attended those of her sex, in

separate lodgings from the men; these were taken care of by Julian, who from his charity is named the Hospitalarian. Egypt, where they lived, had then begun to abound with examples of persons who, either in the cities or in the deserts, devoted themselves to the most perfect exercises of charity, penance, and mortification.

Basilissa, after having stood seven persecutions, died in peace; Julian survived her many years and received the crown of a glorious martyrdom, together with Celsus, a

youth, Antony, a priest, Anastasius, and Marcianilla, the mother of Celsus.

Many churches and hospitals in the East, and especially in the West, bear the name of one or other of these martyrs. Four churches at Rome, and three out of five at Paris, which bear the name of St. Julian, were originally dedicated under the name of St. Julian, the Hospitalarian and martyr.

In the time of St. Gregory the Great, the skull of St. Julian was brought out of the East into France, and given to Queen Brunehaut; she gave it to the nunnery which she founded at étampes; part of it is at present in the monastery of Morigny, near étampes, and part in the church of the regular canonesses of St. Basilissa at Paris.

Excerpted from *Lives of the Saints*, by Alban Butler, Benziger Bros. ed. [1894]

Daily Readings for: [January 09, 2021](#) ([Readings on USCCB website](#))

Collect: Almighty ever-living God, who were pleased to shine forth with new light through the coming of your Only Begotten Son, grant, we pray, that, just as he was pleased to share our bodily form through the childbearing of the Virgin Mary, so we, too, may one day merit to become companions in his kingdom of grace. Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [French Style Shepherd's Pie](#)

ACTIVITIES

- [Day Sixteen ~ St. Francis and the Creche](#)

PRAYERS

- [Christmas Table Blessing 1](#)

- [Christmas Table Blessing 2](#)
- [Christmas Table Blessing 3](#)
- [Christmas Table Blessing 4](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas Season \(2nd Plan\)](#)
- [Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas \(1st Plan\)](#)
- [Novena to Ask for the Intercession of the Venerable Pauline Jaricot](#)

LIBRARY

- [None](#)

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2021-01-09>

Christmas: January 10th

Feast of the Baptism of the Lord

Old Calendar: Feast of the Holy Family

Today the Church celebrates the Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord. This brings to an end the season of Christmas. The Church recalls Our Lord's second manifestation or epiphany which occurred on the occasion of His baptism in the Jordan. Jesus descended into the River to sanctify its waters and to give them the power to beget sons of God. The event takes on the importance of a second creation in which the entire Trinity intervenes.



In the Eastern Church this feast is called Theophany because at the baptism of Christ in the River Jordan God appeared in three persons. The baptism of John was a sort of sacramental preparatory for the Baptism of Christ. It moved men to sentiments of repentance and induced them to confess their sins. Christ did not need the baptism of John. Although He appeared in the “substance of our flesh” and was recognized “outwardly like unto ourselves”, He was absolutely sinless and impeccable. He conferred upon the water the power of the true Baptism which would remove all the sins of the world: “Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him Who takes away the sin of the world”.

Many of the incidents which accompanied Christ's baptism are symbolical of what happened at our Baptism. At Christ's baptism the Holy Spirit descended upon Him; at our Baptism the Trinity took its abode in our soul. At His baptism Christ was proclaimed the “Beloved Son” of the Father; at our Baptism we become the adopted sons of God. At Christ's baptism the heavens were opened; at our Baptism heaven was opened to us. At His baptism Jesus prayed; after our Baptism we must pray to avoid actual sin.

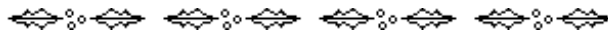
— Excerpted from Msgr. Rudolph G. Bandas



Customs on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord

In the Ukraine the faithful gather in the front of the church where a cross of ice is placed. Since there are no rivers near churches, a tub is filled with water and is placed in front of the ice cross. During special and very unique services the water is blessed and brought home. This is taken in before breakfast is eaten. The remains are kept during the year to keep the home safe from fire, lightening and sickness.

The priest visits his parishioners to bless their homes with the holy water that the New Year may be one of cooperation with the gift of God; His Son and the participation in the Life He has come to lead us in toward Salvation. The evening meal is very much a repeat of the Holy Supper except that there are no restrictions on meat and dairy products. It starts with *Kutia*, which has been saved from Christmas Eve.



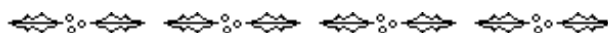
Feast of the Baptism of Christ - Day Nineteen

Today we celebrate the baptism of Christ in the Jordan. This is the second epiphany, or manifestation, of the Lord. The past, the present, and the future are made manifest in this epiphany.

The most holy one placed Himself among us, the unclean and sinners. The Son of God freely humbled Himself at the hand of the Baptist. By His baptism in the Jordan, Christ manifests His humility and dedicates Himself to the redemption of man. He takes upon Himself the sins of the whole world and buries them in the waters of the Jordan.
— *The Light of the World* by Benedict Baur, O.S.B.



- [Day Nineteen activity](#) (*Renewal of Baptismal Vows*)
- [Day Nineteen recipe](#) (*Christ's Diapers*)



The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord

The mystery of Christ's baptism in the Jordan by St John, the Precursor, proposes the contemplation of an already adult Jesus. This mystery is infinitely linked to the Solemnities of the Lord's birth and the Epiphany that we have just celebrated, as in some ways it takes up and represents their significance to us.

At Christmas we have contemplated the human birth of the Word incarnate by the Virgin Mary. In the 4th century, the Fathers of the Church deepened the understanding of the faith with regard to the Christmas mystery in the light of Jesus' Humanity. They spoke of the Incarnation of the Word already working like the 'Christification' of that humanity that he had assumed from His mother. Or put in simpler terms: Jesus is the Christ from the first instant of conception in Mary's spotless womb because He Himself, with His Divine Power, consecrated, anointed and 'Christified' that human nature with which He became incarnate.



In the mystery of the Epiphany, we then meditated on Christ's manifestation to all nations that was represented by the Magi, the wise men from the East, who came to adore the Child.

Now, in the mystery of Christ's Baptism in the Jordan River, we again encounter and represent the truth of the Lord's incarnation and His manifestation as the Christ. Jesus' Baptism is in fact His definitive manifestation as the Messiah or Christ to Israel, and as the Son of the Father to the entire world. Here we find the dimension of the Epiphany which was His manifestation to all nations. The Father's voice from heaven shows that Jesus of Nazareth is the eternal Son and the descent of the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove shows the Trinitarian nature of the Christian God. The true and unique God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, shows Himself in Christ, through Him, with Him and in Him.

The Baptism in the Jordan returns to the great Christmas theme of 'Christification,' Jesus of Nazareth's spiritual anointing, His presentation as the Anointed One par excellence, the Messiah or the One sent by the Father for the salvation of mankind. The Spirit that descended on Jesus shows and seals in an incontrovertible way the 'Christification' of Jesus' humanity that the Word had already fulfilled from the first moment of His miraculous conception by Mary. Jesus, from the very beginning, was always the Lord's Christ, He was always God. Yet, His one, true humanity, that which is

perfect in every way, as the Gospel records, constantly grew in natural and supernatural perfection. ‘*And Jesus increased in wisdom, in stature, and in favour with God and with men*’ (Lk2:52). In Israel at 30 years of age, one reached full maturity and therefore could become a master. Jesus came of age and the Spirit, descending and remaining on Him, definitively consecrated His whole being as the Christ.

The same Spirit, that descended on the water of the River Jordan wafted over the waters during the first creation (Gen 1:2). Therefore, the Baptism in the Jordan presents yet another truth: that Jesus has started a new creation. He is the second man (1 Cor 15:47) or the last Adam (1 Cor 15:45), that comes to repair the first Adam’s guilt. He does this as the Lamb of God that takes away our sins. *‘Looking at the events in light of the Cross and Resurrection, the Christian people realised what happened: Jesus loaded the burden of all mankind’s guilt upon His shoulders; he bore it down into the depths of the Jordan. He inaugurated his public activity by stepping into the place of sinners’* (Joseph Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth*, Bloomsbury 2007, p 18).

Excerpted from the [Congregation for the Clergy](#)

Commentary for the Readings in the Extraordinary Form: Second Sunday after Epiphany: Feast of the Holy Family

“(Jesus) came to Nazareth, and was subject to them” (Gospel).

Subject to them is the awe-inspiring phrase which sums up His Life. Humbly did He abide by the decrees of human law! Obedience to *My Father’s business* must come first, as a guide to all other business, if heaven is to find our family unbroken (Prayer)



If Jesus withdraws from us as a test of our love, or if we lose Him by the commission of sin, we will not regain the joy of His Presence amid the distractions of *relatives and acquaintances*; but we will find Him *in the temple* at Confession and Communion.

So-called “modern” ideas and practices are evicting Christ from the home. As an antidote, at the family meal let us read aloud from the New Testament. *Let the word of Christ dwell* in your home (Epistle). Then will your family, even though living in

“obscurity” as did the Holy Family, advance *in wisdom and ... grace before God and men* (Gospel).

— Excerpted from *My Sunday Missal*, Confraternity of the Precious Blood

Daily Readings for: January 10, 2021 (Readings on USCCB website)

Collect: Almighty ever-living God, who, when Christ had been baptized in the River Jordan and as the Holy Spirit descended upon him, solemnly declared him your beloved Son, grant that your children by adoption, reborn of water and the Holy Spirit, may always be well pleasing to you. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

RECIPES

- [Initial Cookies](#)
- [Kutia](#)
- [Letter banket](#)
- [Christ's Diapers](#)

ACTIVITIES

- [Activities for the Feast of the Baptism of Christ](#)
- [Baptismal Day](#)
- [Christmas and the Eucharist](#)
- [Family and Friends of Jesus Scrapbook Album](#)
- [Making a Baptismal Garment and Candle](#)
- [On Celebrating Baptism](#)
- [Receive the White Garment](#)

- Renewal of Baptismal Promises
- Sacramental Life in the Home: Baptism

PRAYERS

- Christmas Table Blessing 1
- Christmas Table Blessing 2
- Christmas Table Blessing 3
- Christmas Table Blessing 4
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas Season (2nd Plan)
- To Jordan's Water
- Book of Blessings: Blessing Before and After Meals: Christmas (1st Plan)
- Renewal of Baptismal Promises

LIBRARY

- Baptism Is Not a Formality | Pope Francis
- Baptism Is the Starting Point of a Lifelong Path to Conversion | Pope Francis
- Feast of the Baptism of the Lord | Pope Benedict XVI

View this item on CatholicCulture.org:

<http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/liturgicalyear/calendar/day.cfm?date=2021-01-10>

About CatholicCulture.org

The chapters of this book appeared first on the Trinity Communications website, CatholicCulture.org.

Our website includes many more Catholic materials, including daily news, commentary, liturgical year resources, Church documents, reviews, and collections of historic Catholic writings and references. You can also sign up for daily and weekly email newsletters.

Trinity Communications is a non-profit corporation. If you would like to support our work, please register and contribute on the website; or mail a check or money order along with your email address to Trinity Communications, P.O. Box 582, Manassas, VA 20108, USA.

We look forward to seeing you at www.catholicculture.org.