

ST. MARY PARISH

PRAYER JOURNAL



LONGING | PREPARING | WAITING

Advent 2024

Introduction

This journal is designed to enrich your spiritual journey during the Liturgical seasons of Advent and Christmas. Daily you will have the opportunity to reflect on particular scripture, pray, journal, and grow with the Church's feast days in a special way.

Liturgical Living On the first page, you will find a few ideas to bring liturgy alive in the home to prepare and decorate for our seasons. Slowly preparing your domestic church to celebrate the beauty of our Faith.

Saints of the Day The Liturgical calendar is littered with special Feasts. On these Feast Days, we provide an opportunity for you to grow in your faith through the lives of the saints. We hope their lives, stories and virtues help serve as inspiration for your own spiritual growth.

Readings and Reflections You will find the daily scripture from the scriptures of the along with a few reflective questions designed to stimulate thought about the overall message of that day's reading. This section encourages you to dive deeper into the scriptures, often times putting yourself in the story and allow the living Word to come alive in you.

Liturgy Reflection Dedicated to Sunday Liturgy, this page invites you into a deeper engagement with your Mass experience on Sunday. It includes space to note who you would like to pray for, how you can serve your family and community, how to be intentional with family, friends, or coworkers, and reflections on what you received from the Word during Mass.

Parish Announcements Lastly, you will find advertisements for upcoming events in our parish. Stay informed and get involved in our community activities.

We hope this journal becomes a valuable companion in your daily spiritual practice, helping you to grow closer to God and enrich your faith life.

Liturgical Living

First Sunday of Advent (Advent Wreath)

- Tradition: On the First Sunday of Advent, families light the first candle on the Advent wreath, and each subsequent Sunday another candle is lit, progressing toward the celebration of Christmas.
 - Why: The Advent wreath symbolizes the anticipation of Christ's birth. The candles represent the light of Christ coming into the world, with each new candle emphasizing the growing hope as Christmas approaches.

St. Nicholas Day (December 6)

- Tradition: On St. Nicholas Day, children place their shoes out, and St. Nicholas fills them with small gifts, such as candy, fruit, or coins. Some also hang stockings for St. Nicholas to fill.
 - Why: St. Nicholas, known for his charity and gift-giving, is often considered the precursor to Santa Claus. This tradition of gift-giving brings the focus on kindness and generosity early in the Advent season.

Our Lady of Guadalupe (December 12)

- Tradition: In many homes, families prepare a special meal, often including Mexican dishes like tamales, tacos, and atole, to honor the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe.
 - Why: This feast celebrates the apparition of the Virgin Mary to Juan Diego in 1531. The food and festive gatherings are a way of showing devotion to Our Lady of Guadalupe, a central figure in Catholicism in the Americas, and of celebrating the cultural and spiritual importance of this event

Feast of St. Lucy (December 13)

- Tradition: On the Feast of St. Lucy, families, particularly in Scandinavian countries, decorate their homes with candles and lights, sometimes with a focus on lighting up the darkest days of the year.
 - Why: St. Lucy is the patron saint of the blind, and her feast day marks the beginning of the Christmas season in many northern European cultures. The tradition of lighting candles reflects the hope that St. Lucy brings as a symbol of light in the darkness.

Liturgical Living

O Antiphons (December 17–23)

- Tradition: The O Antiphons are a series of ancient prayers sung or recited during the evening prayer in the days leading up to Christmas. Each antiphon highlights a different title of Christ, such as “O Wisdom,” “O Root of Jesse,” and “O Emmanuel.” Some families incorporate these into their nightly prayers, often with the lighting of candles or a family gathering for reflection.

- Why: These prayers have been part of the Church's liturgy for centuries and are meant to intensify the anticipation of Christ's birth. Reciting the O Antiphons helps families focus on the deep theological meanings of Advent and prepares them spiritually for Christmas.

Christmas Tree and Star

- Tradition: Many families put up their Christmas tree and Star on the third Sunday of Advent or closer to Christmas Eve and take them down after Epiphany or after the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

- Why: The tree and decorations are meant to symbolize the joy of Christ's birth. The time between Advent and Epiphany marks the liturgical season of Christmas, and the decorations are meant to stay up for the full celebration, ending when the Christmas season officially concludes.

Liturgy Reflection

December 1st - First Sunday of Advent - Hope

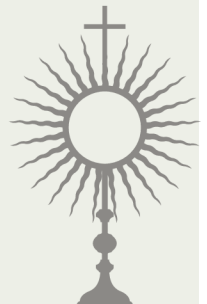
MY MASS INTENTION



HOW CAN I SERVE THIS WEEK



WHAT IS MY PRAYER INTENTION FOR THIS WEEK:



WHAT DID I RECEIVE IN THE WORD

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HOMILY TAKE AWAYS



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Breakfast with
St. Nicholas

DESAYUNO CON SAN NICOLAS



Dec 8
9am-12pm
Parish Center



MONDAY

GOD'S PLAN AND OUR HOPE IN CHRIST

“For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord,
plans for welfare and not for woe, so as to give you a future of hope.”

JEREMIAH 29:11

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ, let us trust in God's perfect plan for our lives. He has a future of hope prepared for us, just as He did for the world through the coming of Jesus. Even in the midst of uncertainty, we can look toward this season with hope, knowing that God is working for our welfare. God's promise to us is one of hope, and the Christmas season reminds us of His ultimate plan of salvation for humanity through the birth of Jesus. He is a God who works for our welfare, and He invites us to trust in His perfect plan, just as Mary and Joseph trusted God's plan in the arrival of Jesus.

Reflect on a time when you felt uncertain about the future. How can you trust God's plan for you, even in difficult circumstances, as you prepare for Christmas?

Consider the areas of your life where you need to surrender control to God. How can you embrace the hope of Christ's birth and allow Him to guide you through this season?

December 3



ST. FRANCIS XAVIER (1506-1552)

A FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE JESUIT ORDER, IS CELEBRATED FOR HIS PROFOUND MISSIONARY WORK IN ASIA, INCLUDING INDIA, MALAYSIA, AND JAPAN. HIS LIFE EXEMPLIFIES THE IMPACT OF EVANGELICAL ZEAL COUPLED WITH CULTURAL SENSITIVITY, ADAPTING TO LOCAL LANGUAGES AND CUSTOMS TO SPREAD CHRISTIANITY. HIS STORY IS A COMPELLING EXAMPLE OF DEDICATION TO MISSION AND SHOWS THE POWER OF LIVING ONE'S FAITH THROUGH ACTION, ENCOURAGING MODERN BELIEVERS TO SHARE CHRIST'S LOVE ACROSS CULTURAL AND NATIONAL BOUNDARIES.

TUESDAY

JOY AND PEACE IN THE ADVENT SEASON

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

ROMANS 15:13

As we prepare for Christmas, let us make space for the joy and peace that come from Christ. His joy, which fills us with hope, is a reminder that we are not alone in the trials we face. His peace is a gift, and we are invited to receive it fully as we celebrate His coming into the world. The Christmas season is a celebration of the joy and peace that Christ brings to the world. As we reflect on His birth, we are reminded that He came to fill us with joy and peace that surpasses all understanding. The Holy Spirit empowers us to live in this joy and to share it with others.

Reflect on how you experience joy and peace in your life, especially as you prepare for Christmas. Are there areas where you need the Holy Spirit to fill you with more of these gifts?

Consider how you can lean into the power of the Holy Spirit this Advent season to abound in hope. What practices can you adopt to strengthen your belief in God's promises as you await Christ's birth?

WEDNESDAY

THE TRUSTWORTHINESS OF GOD'S PROMISES IN ADVENT

“Let us hold unwaveringly to our confession that gives us hope, for he who made the promise is trustworthy.”

HEBREWS 10:23

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus, let us hold firmly to the hope we have in Christ, trusting that God is faithful to His promises. The hope we have in Jesus is unwavering, just as the promises of His coming are certain. This season, we celebrate the fulfillment of God's promises in the birth of Christ. The Christmas season is a time to reflect on God's faithfulness in keeping His promise to send a Savior. Jesus' birth is the fulfillment of God's promises, and as we prepare to celebrate His coming, we are reminded to hold firm in our hope, knowing that God will fulfill all His promises to us.

Reflect on the promises God has made to you.

How has His faithfulness been evident in your life, especially during Advent?

As you prepare for Christmas, how can you hold firmly to the hope in Christ, especially in moments of doubt or difficulty? How can you remind yourself of His trustworthiness throughout this season?

THURSDAY

WAITING WITH HOPE AND EXPECTATION

“But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they will soar on eagle’s wings; they will run and not grow weary; walk and not grow faint.”

ISAIAH 40:31

As we wait for the celebration of Christ’s birth, let us reflect on the active trust that waiting requires. The season of Advent invites us to wait with hope, trusting that God will renew our strength as we anticipate the arrival of our Savior. His coming brings us the strength to persevere, just as He gave strength to Mary and Joseph. Waiting for the Lord is not a passive act.

As we prepare for Christmas, we are called to wait in anticipation and trust, knowing that God is renewing our strength. The hope of His coming gives us perseverance in all things, and we are invited to wait with eagerness for the joy He brings.

Reflect on the times you have had to wait on God. How has He renewed your strength during seasons of waiting, especially as you anticipate Christmas?

Consider areas in your life where you are feeling weary or discouraged. How can you wait on God with hope this Advent, trusting in His ability to restore your energy and perseverance as you await the celebration of Christ’s birth?

December 6



ST. NICHOLAS

(270-343)

THE BISHOP OF MYRA, IS RENOWNED FOR HIS EXTRAORDINARY GENEROSITY AND CARE FOR THE NEEDY. HIS LEGENDARY ACTS OF GIVING, SUCH AS SECRETLY PROVIDING DOWRIES FOR IMPOVERISHED GIRLS, HAVE INSPIRED THE FIGURE OF SANTA CLAUS AND EMBODY THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTIAN GENEROSITY. HIS LIFE ENCOURAGES BELIEVERS TO PRACTICE GENEROSITY AND PROTECT THE INNOCENT, PARTICULARLY DURING THE ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS SEASONS.

FRIDAY

REJOICING IN GOD'S LOVE AND HOPE

“Not only that, but we even rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us.”

ROMANS 5:3-5

Let us prepare our hearts to celebrate the joy that comes from the hope found in Christ’s birth. The Christmas season is a time to rejoice in the fact that God’s love has been poured into our hearts. This love, experienced through the birth of Jesus, is the foundation of our hope, and it is this love that carries us through every trial.

The Christmas season is a celebration of God’s greatest gift—His love poured out through the birth of Jesus. As we reflect on His coming, we rejoice in the hope that this love brings, knowing that it will never disappoint. Our perseverance through trials is strengthened by this love, and it gives us the hope that we will one day experience the fullness of His presence.

Reflect on a time when you experienced suffering. How did it help develop your endurance and character, and how did God’s love offer you hope during that time?

As you prepare for Christmas, how can you rejoice in your sufferings, knowing that God’s love is refining you and producing hope? How can you lean into His love this Advent season to experience the hope He offers through the birth of Jesus?

December 7



ST. AMBROSE
(340-397)

AS BISHOP OF MILAN, HE IS REMEMBERED NOT ONLY FOR HIS ROLE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF EARLY CHURCH DOCTRINE BUT ALSO FOR HIS STAUNCH DEFENSE OF THE CHURCH'S INDEPENDENCE FROM SECULAR RULERS. HIS MENTORSHIP OF SAINT AUGUSTINE AND HIS ABILITY TO BALANCE CHURCH AND STATE ISSUES OFFER MODELS FOR ENGAGING WITH THE MODERN WORLD WHILE STAYING TRUE TO RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLES. HIS DEDICATION TO THE FAITH AND PREACHING INTEGRITY HIGHLIGHTS THE IMPORTANCE OF STRONG, PRINCIPLED LEADERSHIP IN FAITH.



**DEC
12**

GUADALUPE

6AM

Mass + Misa
Matachines

6PM

Candlelight Procession
from Downtown Sherman
Procesión con velas desde
el centro de Sherman
Danza Azteca

7PM

Mass + Misa
Mariachi

Liturgy Reflection

December 8th - Second Sunday of Advent - Peace

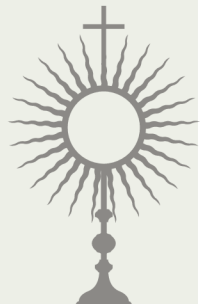
MY MASS INTENTION



HOW CAN I SERVE THIS WEEK



WHAT IS MY PRAYER INTENTION FOR THIS WEEK:



HOLY DAY OF OBLIGATION

December 8 | Observed December 9, 2024



SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION



THIS FEAST HONORS MARY'S CONCEPTION WITHOUT ORIGINAL SIN, UNDERSCORING HER SPECIAL ROLE IN SALVATION HISTORY. THIS FEAST INVITES THE FAITHFUL TO CONSIDER THE PURITY AND HOLINESS GOD DESIRES FOR ALL, ENCOURAGING A LIFE LIVED IN GRACE FROM BEGINNING TO END, AND INSPIRING BELIEVERS TO SEEK PURITY AND HONOR MARY AS THE MODEL OF HOLINESS.

December 9th



ST. JUAN DIEGO (1474-1548)

KNOWN FOR HIS VISIONS OF OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE IN 1531 NEAR MEXICO CITY, PLAYED A KEY ROLE IN A MAJOR RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL TRANSFORMATION IN MEXICO. HIS HUMBLE ACCEPTANCE OF THESE APPARITIONS AND THE RESULTING CONVERSION OF MILLIONS TO CHRISTIANITY DEMONSTRATE THE POWER OF FAITH AND HUMILITY. HIS STORY ENCOURAGES US THAT GOD OFTEN WORKS THROUGH THE MOST UNLIKELY FIGURES TO REVEAL DIVINE TRUTHS.

MONDAY

SURRENDERING ANXIETIES AND PREPARING FOR CHRIST'S PEACE

“Have no anxiety at all, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. Then the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”

PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7

As we prepare our hearts for the joy of Christ's birth, let us surrender our anxieties to God. In this season of anticipation, we can find peace by praying with thanksgiving, knowing that God's peace will guard us and prepare us to welcome Christ with open hearts. The peace of God is a gift that helps us navigate the stresses of life and the preparations for Christmas. It surpasses all understanding, guarding our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. As we reflect on His coming, let this peace reign in our hearts, freeing us from worry.

Reflect on a current worry or anxiety in your life. How can you surrender this to God in prayer and thanksgiving as you prepare for Christmas?

As you anticipate the celebration of Christ's birth, how can you trust in God's peace to guard your heart, especially in busy or stressful moments?

TUESDAY

EMBRACING CHRIST'S PEACE THIS ADVENT

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. Not as the world gives do I give it to you. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”

JOHN 14:27

As we prepare to celebrate the Prince of Peace, let us receive the lasting peace that Christ offers. This peace calms our hearts and removes fear, preparing us to celebrate the birth of Jesus with joy and assurance that God is with us in all things.

Jesus offers a peace that is unlike the temporary peace of the world—a peace that settles deep within us. As we enter this Christmas season, we are invited to welcome His peace, which calms troubled hearts and replaces fear with trust in God's presence.

Reflect on the difference between the peace Jesus offers and the peace the world offers. In what areas of your life can you invite Jesus' peace to dwell more fully this Advent season?

As you prepare for Christmas, consider the times when your heart has been troubled or fearful. How can you embrace the peace of Christ in those moments?

WEDNESDAY

LETTING CHRIST'S PEACE RULE IN OUR HEARTS THIS SEASON

"Let the peace of Christ control your hearts, the peace into which you were also called in one body. And be thankful"

COLOSSIANS 3:15

During Advent, let us prepare our hearts to let the peace of Christ rule over us, uniting us in love and gratitude. As we wait for His coming, let His peace reign in our hearts, transforming us and enabling us to experience the fullness of His presence at Christmas.

The peace of Christ is meant to govern our hearts, especially during the Advent season, when we are waiting for His arrival. Let His peace unite us and bring harmony to our relationships, and let it lead us to a deeper sense of thankfulness as we prepare for Christmas.

Reflect on areas of your life where you may be struggling to experience peace. How can you invite Christ's peace to reign in those areas, especially during this season of preparation?

Consider how embracing the peace of Christ can lead to greater unity and gratitude in your relationships. How can you express thankfulness today as you prepare for the joy of Christmas?

December 12th



OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE

THIS FEAST COMMEMORATES THE VIRGIN MARY'S APPARITIONS TO SAINT JUAN DIEGO ON THE HILL OF TEPEYAC IN 1531. REVERED AS THE PATRONESS OF THE AMERICAS, SHE SYMBOLIZES COMPASSIONATE CARE AND PROTECTION, ESPECIALLY FOR THE VULNERABLE AND MARGINALIZED. THIS FEAST INSPIRES UNITY AND RECONCILIATION, REFLECTING MARY'S ROLE IN BRINGING TOGETHER DIVERSE CULTURES UNDER THE BANNER OF THE CATHOLIC FAITH.

THURSDAY

PRAYING FOR GOD'S PEACE AT CHRISTMAS

"May the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way.
The Lord be with all of you."

2 THESSALONIANS 3:16

As we anticipate the arrival of Christ, let us pray for His peace to fill every aspect of our lives. In the busyness of Advent, God's peace is a constant reminder that He is with us, bringing comfort and strength as we await His birth.

The peace of God is not limited by time or circumstance. As we prepare for Christmas, we pray that His peace would fill our hearts, our homes, and our lives. This Advent, let His peace strengthen us in our waiting and prepare us to celebrate His coming with joy.

Reflect on areas of your life where you desire God's peace to be present as you prepare for Christmas. What specific situations or relationships need His peace today?

Consider the comfort in knowing that the Lord is with you in every moment. How can you live with greater awareness of His presence and peace as you await Christ's birth?

December 13th



ST. LUCY

(283-304)

A MARTYR FROM SYRACUSE, ITALY, IS CELEBRATED FOR HER STEADFAST DEVOTION TO CHRIST AND HER PROTECTION OF HER PURITY, EVEN UNTO DEATH. KNOWN FOR HER SACRIFICIAL GIVING, HER FEAST DAY ON DECEMBER 13, ASSOCIATED WITH THEMES OF LIGHT IN DARKNESS, REMINDS THE FAITHFUL OF THE SPIRITUAL ILLUMINATION CHRIST BRINGS INTO THE WORLD. HER COURAGE AND PURITY SERVE AS BEACONS FOR THOSE SEEKING TO LIVE A LIFE OF INTEGRITY AND FAITH.

FRIDAY

REJOICING IN GOD'S LOVE AND HOPE

“For a child is born to us, a son is given to us; upon his shoulder dominion rests. They name him Wonderful Counselor, God-Hero, Father-Forever, Prince of Peace.”

ISAIAH 9:5

As we near the celebration of Christmas, let us focus on Jesus, the Prince of Peace, whose birth brings peace to the world and to our hearts. His arrival is the fulfillment of God's promise of peace, and we rejoice in the peace He brings to us this Advent season.

Jesus, the Prince of Peace, comes to bring harmony between God and humanity. As we prepare to celebrate His birth, let us rejoice in the peace He brings. Through His life, death, and resurrection, He has made peace possible, and His presence in our lives continues to bring peace today.

Reflect on how Jesus, as the Prince of Peace, has transformed your life. How has His peace touched your heart and your circumstances in the past?

. Consider how you can share the peace of Christ with others this Christmas. What specific actions or words can you offer today that reflect His peace and love?

December 14th



ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS (1542-1591)

A MYSTIC AND REFORMER OF THE CARMELITE ORDER, IS RENOWNED FOR HIS PROFOUND, POETIC WRITINGS ON THE SOUL'S UNION WITH GOD, PARTICULARLY THROUGH HIS WORKS LIKE "DARK NIGHT OF THE SOUL." HIS TEACHINGS ON SPIRITUAL GROWTH THROUGH SUFFERING AND THE BEAUTY OF CONTEMPLATION PROVIDE DEEP INSIGHTS FOR THOSE EXPERIENCING THEIR OWN SPIRITUAL DARK NIGHTS, ENCOURAGING BELIEVERS TO SEEK TRANSFORMATIVE ENCOUNTERS WITH DIVINE LOVE.

Liturgy Reflection

December 15th - Third Sunday of Advent - Joy

MY MASS INTENTION



HOW CAN I SERVE THIS WEEK



WHAT IS MY PRAYER INTENTION FOR THIS WEEK:



WHAT DID I RECEIVE IN THE WORD

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HOMILY TAKE AWAYS

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MONDAY

EMBRACING THE GIFT OF TODAY WITH JOY

“This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.”

PSALM 118:24

As we prepare for Christmas, let us recognize that each day leading up to the celebration of Christ’s birth is a gift from God. Embracing the present moment with joy allows us to focus on the blessings of today as we await the arrival of our Savior.

Christmas is a time to celebrate the daily gifts God gives us, especially as we prepare for the coming of Christ. By acknowledging God’s sovereignty and goodness, we choose to embrace the joy He provides today. It is in these moments of preparation and waiting that we find joy in the Lord’s work.

Reflect on the ways you can recognize God’s blessings today. How can you shift your perspective to focus on gratitude and joy, even in ordinary moments as you prepare for Christmas?

Consider how you can intentionally embrace joy in your day. What small practices can you adopt to make rejoicing a habit in your life as you anticipate the joy of Christ’s birth?

TUESDAY

THE JOY OF CHRIST IN OUR HEARTS THIS ADVENT

“I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.”

JOHN 15:11

Let us reflect on the joy Christ brings, especially as we prepare for His birth. Jesus desires for His joy to dwell in us, filling us completely. His joy is not fleeting but enduring, offering peace and fulfillment as we await His coming.

The joy of Jesus is meant to be in us, shaping our hearts as we prepare to celebrate His birth. As we wait for Christmas, let His joy complete us, filling us with peace that is rooted in His presence. It is a joy that gives us strength, fulfillment, and the assurance that Christ is with us.

Reflect on the joy you experience in Christ. How does His joy differ from other forms of happiness or pleasure you experience, especially during the Advent season?

Consider areas in your life where you may not feel complete or joyful. How can you invite Jesus' joy into those areas and experience His fullness in this season of preparation?

WEDNESDAY

ANTICIPATING JOY AFTER SORROW

“For his anger lasts but a moment, his favor lasts a lifetime. At dusk weeping comes for the night, but joy comes in the morning.”

PSALM 30:6

As we prepare for Christmas, let us reflect on how joy often follows sorrow. Trusting in God's promise of restoration, we can look forward to the joy of Christ's arrival, knowing that His favor will outweigh any past hardship.

The birth of Christ is a reminder that God's favor and joy come to us even after seasons of sorrow. Advent calls us to trust in God's faithfulness, waiting for the joy that comes with the arrival of our Savior. Let us hold onto the hope of restoration that comes through His birth.

Reflect on a difficult season you've faced.

How has God's favor brought joy and restoration after a time of sorrow?

Consider how you can hold onto hope in seasons of weeping. What practices or prayers can help you trust in God's promises of joy as you prepare for Christmas?

THURSDAY

PRAYING FOR GOD'S PEACE AT CHRISTMAS

“Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance.”

JAMES 1:2 - 3

Let us prepare for Christmas by embracing joy in the midst of trials. Just as the joy of Christ's birth was revealed in the midst of humble circumstances, we too can find joy in our challenges, knowing that God uses them to refine us and strengthen our faith.

As we wait for the celebration of Christ's birth, we are reminded that joy can arise even in trials. Advent invites us to reflect on how God uses life's challenges to shape us and strengthen our faith, preparing our hearts to fully experience the joy of His coming.

Reflect on a recent trial you faced.

How did God use it to strengthen your faith or produce perseverance in you?

Consider how you can embrace joy during your challenges this Advent. What changes in your mindset or attitude will help you rejoice in the midst of difficult circumstances as you prepare for Christmas?

FRIDAY

THE FRUIT OF JOY IN OUR LIVES THIS ADVENT

“But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.”

GALATIANS 5:22 - 23

Let us prepare our hearts for Christmas by allowing the joy of the Holy Spirit to overflow in our lives. As we walk in the Spirit, the fruit of joy becomes evident in our attitudes, actions, and relationships, making us ready to celebrate Christ's birth with hearts full of joy.

The joy of the Holy Spirit is a fruit that grows within us as we align our lives with God's will. As we prepare for Christmas, we are called to cultivate this joy, sharing it with others and reflecting the love and peace that Christ brings into our lives.

Reflect on the fruit of joy in your life. How does the Holy Spirit cultivate this joy within you? How have you experienced joy as a fruit of the Spirit during Advent?

Consider how you can nurture the fruit of joy in your life. What steps can you take to walk more closely with the Holy Spirit and allow His joy to grow in you as you prepare for Christmas?

St. Mary Catholic Parish

Christmas Mass Schedule

December 24

December 25

4:30 PM

12:00 AM

7:00 PM

10:00 AM

11:00 PM Concert

12:30 PM

4:30 PM

Make a plan for you and your loved ones on how you will welcome the Christ child into your family this year.



Liturgy Reflection

December 22nd - Fourth Sunday of Advent - Love

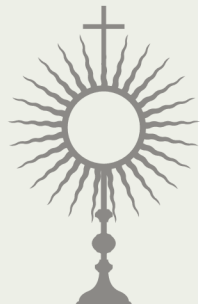
MY MASS INTENTION



HOW CAN I SERVE THIS WEEK



WHAT IS MY PRAYER INTENTION FOR THIS WEEK:



WHAT DID I RECEIVE IN THE WORD

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HOMILY TAKE AWAYS



Lined area for writing homily takeaways.

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MONDAY

REFLECTING ON GOD'S LOVE IN ANTICIPATION OF CHRIST'S BIRTH

“Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God, and everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever is without love does not know God, for God is love.”

1 JOHN 4:7-8

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus, let us reflect on the nature of God's love. Christ's coming into the world is the ultimate expression of God's love for us. We are called to live out this love in our relationships with others, reflecting His deep, sacrificial love, especially during this season of Advent. Christmas is a celebration of God's love, revealed to us through the birth of Jesus. As His children, we are called to reflect that same love in our relationships with others. During Advent, let us prepare our hearts by deepening our connection with God and allowing His love to flow through us as we anticipate the joy of Christ's coming.

Reflect on how God's love has impacted your life. How has knowing God through the coming of Christ changed your capacity to love others, especially during this Advent season?

Consider relationships in your life where love might be difficult. How can you draw closer to God in those situations to better love others, just as Christ loved us?

TUESDAY

LIVING THE QUALITIES OF LOVE IN ADVENT

“With all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another through love.”

EPHESIANS 4:2

During Advent, as we prepare to celebrate Christ’s birth, let us examine the qualities of love that we are called to embody: humility, gentleness, and patience. These qualities are evident in the life of Jesus, who came to serve with humility, offering gentleness to all, and bearing patiently with the flaws of humanity. As we wait for His arrival, we are called to mirror these same qualities in our relationships.

True love is characterized by humility, gentleness, and patience—qualities we see in the heart of Christ. As we prepare for Christmas, let us embrace these attributes in our interactions with others, knowing that they reflect Christ’s love for us. The coming of Christ is an opportunity to practice these qualities, especially in moments when we are challenged by others.

Reflect on the difference between the peace Jesus offers and the peace the world offers. In what areas of your life can you invite Jesus’ peace to dwell more fully this Advent season?

As you prepare for Christmas, consider the times when your heart has been troubled or fearful. How can you embrace the peace of Christ in those moments?

St. Mary Catholic Parish

Christmas Mass Schedule

December 24

December 25

4:30 PM

12:00 AM

7:00 PM

10:00 AM

11:00 PM Concert

12:30 PM

4:30 PM

Join us for the Christmas Concert on December 24th at 11:00 PM and bring your welcome to Mass to welcome Christ, the Lord.



Merry Christmas

