

First Sunday of
ADVENT



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Our Lady of Peace Church

Sunday, November 21, 2021



My dear friends,

The light shines on in the darkness

With this First Sunday of Advent, we begin a new church liturgical year. To get us started, let's take a look at how the church understands this Season. "Advent has a two-fold character, for it is a time of preparation for the Solemnities of Christmas, in which the First Coming of the Son of God to humanity is remembered, and likewise a time when, by remembrance of this, minds and hearts are led to look forward to Christ's Second Coming at the end of time. For these two reasons, Advent is a period of devout and expectant delight."

We might compare Advent with the time of joyful expectation when a couple is waiting for a child to be born. In the coming of a new life, human beings participate in the very creative power of God, the ability to start anew, to have a new hope, even in the midst of exhaustion, uncertainty and a sense of feeling overwhelmed. Nature itself provides a backdrop for Advent: the gaudy colors of autumn have left us, and there is a stark simplicity, a stillness of dormancy all around us. We know that life will burst forth again in joyful newness. And so, we have the opportunity to slow down, become more reflective, and to ponder the immense love of God that gently speaks to our souls.

Of course, our culture and our society pull us into greater busy-ness, with all the expectations forced upon us—shopping, finding the perfect gifts, mailing cards, decorating, parties, and all the rest. It's easy to wake up on Christmas morning, exhausted and grateful that it's all over—instead of appreciating the dawn of our salvation and the reason to have hope in a challenging, and often threatening, world. So, the questions becomes, not can we, but will we carve out some moments of precious time to give ourselves to this "period of devout and expectant delight." It sounds wonderful, and promising, doesn't it?

One of the beautiful symbols we have each year at this time is the **Advent Wreath**—which provides a steady, regular marking of the progression of time, with growing expectation, toward the Birth of our hope of salvation. As we light an additional candle with the passing of each week of this special time, there is a gradual growth of light. In the beautiful, poetic prologue of the Gospel of John we read, "The light shines on in the darkness, a darkness that did not overcome it" (John 1:5). What a wonderful thought! We have been through the on-going ordeal of the pandemic, many are struggling with loneliness and deprivation of the human touch, anxiety and depression appear to be growing—but the light shines on in the darkness, and the darkness will not overcome it!

Let us consider the symbolism of the **Advent Wreath**. The wreath itself is made of various evergreens, signifying continuous life. The wreath is a circle, without beginning or end, pointing to the eternity of God and the eternal life that awaits us. Note that three of the candles are purple, which is the liturgical color of Advent, signifying prayer, penance and sacrifice. The pink candle is lit on the Third Sunday of Advent, sometimes called (in the Latin) "Gaudete" which means: rejoice! It is a plural command: Everybody, rejoice! Even in the darkness of winter and of pandemic, God's salvation is coming into the world, and nothing can stop it.

Each candle has a traditional symbolic meaning. The first purple candle, sometimes called the "Prophecy Candle" in remembrance of the prophets, especially Isaiah, who foretold the coming of the Messiah, is a symbol of **hope**. The second candle, a symbol of **faith**, is often called the "Bethlehem Candle" recalling the journey of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem for the birth of the child. The third candle, lit on the Third Sunday of Advent stands for **joy** and is referred to as the "Shepherd's Candle" recalling the angels message that the shepherds are to rejoice at the birth of the Savior; and finally, the fourth, purple candle, referred to as the "Angel's Candle" symbolizes the **peace** that the angels announced at the birth of the Prince of Peace.

During each week of Advent, let's make use of the rich symbolism of the Advent Wreath, spending some time in silent prayer and meditation on the gift that is Christmas, and its deep spiritual meaning. Jesus Christ is the sign and source of all that is good and right with us and with all of God's creation, and we can use this time to grow in hope, faith, joy and peace, remembering that "the light shines on in the darkness, a darkness that did not overcome it."



Saturday, November 27-Rosary at 3:15P

4:00P *Maureen Shanahan*
by John & Suzanne Davis

Sunday, November 28

8:00A *Lauren & Jeffrey*
by Bob & Yvette Bissell

10:00A *Health & blessings for Mark Galvis*
by Charlotte & family

Saturday, December 4-Rosary at 3:15P

4:00P *Carol Demers*
by Fran & family

Sunday, December 5

8:00A *Jerry O'Connor*
by his family

10:00A *Joseph Piurkowski*
by Michelle Turner

DAILY MASS

Monday, November 29

8:00A *Mary Carey*
by John Carey

Tuesday, November 30

8:00A *Sarah Barry*
by John Carey

Wednesday, December 1

8:00P *Patricia Caloon*
by her family

Thursday, December 2

8:00A *Loretta Patterson*
by her family

Friday, December 3—Holy Communion Service



Our Lady's Window

November 19-26
Virginia Garrand
by her family

November 22
George Farr
by Gay & Cathy

November 30
Pat & Peg Lewandowski
by JoAnn Waryasz

December 2
Jim Viens 5th anniversary
by his family

December 4
Julianne "Babe" Sak
by Gary



AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM
at Montague Catholic Social Ministries is in need of snacks for the kids. The school day is long and snacks are appreciated.

RCIA for anyone interested in learning about Catholicism will meet Sunday, **December 5, 12, & 19** at 9:00A in the rectory. Call Marguerite 863.2585 ext. 103.



WOMEN'S GROUP will meet Tuesday, **December 14** at 6:00P in the church hall. Members are asked to bring gifts for the homeless shelter. Gifts must be wrapped and marked with the size for a man or women.

They are in need of socks, underwear, t-shirts, and personal hygiene items.

PRAYER LINE is available for all parishioners who have special intentions for which they would like the parish to pray. Call the rectory with your intention.



LET US KNOW Hospitals and nursing facilities do not notify us when our parishioners are admitted either on a temporary or permanent basis. We rely on family members or friends to keep us updated on these situations so that we may connect with that person. Please call Marguerite and



MASSES AND OUR LADY'S WINDOW intentions are still available for 2021 and 2022. Often intentions are in memory of someone who has died but the intentions can be for anniversaries, health, or happy occasions. Call the rectory with your special intention

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