

Advent & Christmas Seasons



Blessed Advent Candles available in the Library

Meaning of the Advent Wreath: The wreath is circular to recall the never-ending Kingdom which Jesus established. It has four candles for the four weeks of Advent, with the pink candle for the Third Sunday which is Gaudete Sunday (meaning “Rejoice”). The green represents the life which is given by Christ. Holly has thorns to remind us that Jesus came to suffer for our salvation, and the red berries symbolizes our Lord’s blood first shed at his circumcision on the eight day of Christmas. As we light more candles each week, the light of Christ comes to us shining more brilliantly as we approach Christmas. We can light our Advent wreath every Sunday and even every evening. Maybe read the daily readings from the Mass (found online or on many different apps) and also sing “Creator of the Starts of Night”.

The Jesse Tree tradition involves reading from the Old Testament, especially passages which prepare us for the Coming of the Messiah. Each day of Advent, a new ornament is hung on the tree—called “Jesse Tree” because Jesse was the father of King David, and it is from his “family tree” that Jesus was born!

The Jesse Tree also prepares us well for the Christmas Tree which we put up and begin to decorate only in the last days of Advent, but which we leave up well into the month of January!

See the handouts provided by Father Ryan for information on how to practice his fun family devotion.



The Three Wise Men didn’t arrive until January 6th—remember, the Twelve Days of Christmas are the days AFTER Christmas.

Be sure to celebrate Christmas fully for all Twelve Days, and continue on until at least January 13th (the Octave of Epiphany). Our Christmas spirit of devotion continues through January until February 2nd when Jesus was presented in the Temple.



Pray 15 times a day from

November 30 to December 24

St. Andrew Christmas Novena

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, *(mention your intentions here)* through the merits of Our Savior Jesus Christ, and of His Blessed Mother. Amen.

During Advent, we prepare for Jesus' birth at Christmas by joining the patriarchs and prophets in awaiting the coming of Jesus. Advent is a penitential season, as seen by the Church's use of violet vestments and more somber music and decorations. Our home should mimic what we are doing in our church - use purple to decorate the dining table and other places in the home, hold off on Christmas themes until it's Christmas and let Advent be Advent in your family! During this time, the Advent wreath is our primary symbol, not the Christmas tree - it is quite inappropriate to have a fully decorated Christmas Tree throughout the season of Advent.

On the other hand, Catholics celebrate Christmas with particular joy when it really is Christmas! We continue to celebrate Christmas with much festivity through the whole Twelve Days, till January 6th. The Christmas spirit continues even until February 2nd. Let Advent be Advent, and let Christmas be Christmas!

Here are some simple ideas for decorating the home during the Advent and Christmas seasons. These are just suggestions and do not follow a hard and fast rule.

First Sunday of Advent

Put out the purple tablecloth and use purple and dark colors in other places throughout the home. Place the Advent wreath on the dining table or in another prominent place in the home.



Second Sunday of Advent

December 6th, St Nicholas Day - Put out the stockings and write our Christmas wish-list.

December 8th, The Immaculate Conception - Today we use a white or gold table cloth with nice happy flowers, and we decorate a statue or image of Mary.

But we switch back to the purple table cloth tomorrow.

Third Sunday of Advent, Gaudete Sunday

Put garland up around the home, and a simple wreath on the door.



December 13th, St Lucy Day - Place a few of the Christmas lights around the inside and outside of the house.

December 16th, Christmas Novena, 9 days till Christmas eve! - Put out the Nativity set, without any of the figures, just the stable and hay, etc.

December 17th to December 23rd - Each day, place more figures in the

Nativity set: shepherds and sheep, ox and ass, and other livestock, the empty manger. Mary and Joseph go in on the last couple days before Christmas. Do not put in the Baby Jesus, or any of the Wise Men, or the Angel, or the Star.

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Put up the Christmas Tree, but without any lights or ornaments. Put up the rest of the greenery around the home, but again without any ornaments. Put up more lights on the outside of the house, but don't turn them on at night (only those that have been up since St Lucy Day).



"Rorate" Candlelight Masses are a great tradition in the final Nine Days of Advent!

Father Ryan's Recommendations

(simply some ideas of how to enter more fully into Advent)

Attend daily Mass as often as possible, make it a priority to attend at least one daily Mass a week. Additionally, make frequent use of the sacrament of confession (at least once a month).

Consider adding some penitential practices to your Advent - perhaps some little bit fasting on Fridays and abstaining from meat (and maybe even from eggs and dairy products) on Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. For those who are able, it would be especially good to practice extra fasting and abstinence during Ember week (the Third Week of Advent).

Finally, many devotions are especially helpful during Advent: The Rosary, Scripture Reading (especially Isaiah and Luke), and Eucharistic Adoration. I especially recommend dinner time family devotions around the Advent

Wreath and perhaps incorporating the Jesse Tree tradition (much more can be found about the Jesse Tree through a simple online search) or the Advent Calendar. Advent hymns like "Creator of the Stars of Night," "Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming," and "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" are great to sing, rather than Christmas carols (which are saved until Christmas season). It is always great to listen to the first half of Handel's Messiah during Advent and Christmas seasons!

December 24th, Christmas Eve - Put up the remaining lights on the outside of the home and all around the tree and throughout the house. These lights are finally all turned on tonight! Fully decorate the tree and garland around the home. In the early eve, replace the purple and other dark colors around the home with white and gold and happy colors!

December 25th, Christmas Day - At midnight, place the Baby Jesus in the Nativity Set and kneel for a moment as a family to worship the newborn King! The star and the angel are also placed in the Nativity set, but not the wise men or their camel. All other Christmas decoration are placed throughout the home!

December 25th to January 5th - The wise men begin to make their journey through our home, as they travel from Persia to Bethlehem. Additional small presents are given on each of the Twelve Days of Christmas.

January 1st, Octave Day of Christmas - Mary is the Mother of God, we decorate a picture or statue of her and celebrate with special flowers on the dinner table and throughout the home! Our Christmas lights are still burning brightly! Remember that we are celebrating Mary as Mother of God, this is much more important than New Year's or football - don't let our secular culture take over your Christmas!

January 6th, Epiphany - The Magi finally arrive and are placed in the Nativity Set! Any extra decorations are set up inside and outside the house today! This is the day that Christmas was revealed to the world! It is as great a feast as Christmas itself, and we should take pride in having our Tree up and our Christmas lights fully aglow! Throw your Christmas/Epiphany party today!



January 7th to January 13th, the Octave of Epiphany - Around January 13th we begin to gradually reduce our Christmas decorations and begin to put them away. But our Christmas spirit continues till February 2nd, and we keep at least our Nativity Set in a prominent position until then.

May God grant us all a most prayerful Advent, so that we will be ready to receive Christ with true Christmas joy!

PRAYER OF BLESSING FOR HOMES DURING CHRISTMAS SEASON

Leader: +In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

In the following or similar words, the minister prepares those present for the blessing: The Word became flesh and made his dwelling place among us. It is Christ who enlightens our hearts and homes with his love. It is Christ, risen from the dead, who is our source of hope, joy, and comfort. May all who enter this home find Christ's light and love.

A lay minister says the prayer with hands joined.

Leader: Lord God of heaven and earth, you revealed your only-begotten Son to every nation by the guidance of a star. Bless this house and all who inhabit it. Fill them with the light of Christ, that their concern for others may reflect your love. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

The house is then sprinkled with holy water. (Holy water is available at the back of the church)

After the prayers of the blessing are recited, each room of the home is sprinkled with Epiphany water.

The initials of the Magi – Caspar, Melchior, Balthasar – are inscribed upon the doors with the blessed chalk. (C, M, B, can also be interpreted as the Latin phrase "Christus mansionem benedicat" which means "Christ bless this house".)

Example: 20 + C + M + B + 22 (22 for the year 2022)

A lay minister concludes the rite by signing himself or herself with the sign of the cross and saying:

Leader: May Christ Jesus dwell with us, keep us from all harm, and make us one in mind and heart, now and for ever.

All: Amen.

(Blessed chalk is available in the gathering area on the Sunday of Epiphany)

SERVING COMMUNITITES SINCE 1948

a 4th generation family owned business

WELDING EQUIPMENT & SUPPLIES | INDUSTRIAL & MEDICAL GASES
BEVERAGE CO2 | SAFETY SUPPLIES



~ The Bliss Family

WWW.GENDCO.COM



Douglas WILSON
and Company, P.C.

1000 First Avenue South
Great Falls, MT 59401
406-761-4645
www.dwcogf.com

**ADT-Monitored
Home Security**

Get 24-Hour Protection
From a Name You Can Trust

- Burglary
- Fire Safety
- Flood Detection
- Carbon Monoxide



SafeStreets

1-855-225-4251

Holy Spirit



Catholic School

Pre-K through 8th grade

Where Academics are
Guided by the Spirit
www.holyspiritgfschool.org



Schedule your visit today!
406.761.5775



OUR LADY OF LOURDES
CATHOLIC SCHOOL

"A Community Rooted in
Tradition and Faith, Educating
for the Future"

Please Call Today for a Private Tour
406.452.0551

www.ollschoolgfmt.org

Preschool - 8th Grade

**AVAILABLE FOR
A LIMITED TIME!**
ADVERTISE HERE NOW!

Contact **Shannon Miller** to place
an ad today!
smiller1@4LPi.com or
(800) 950-9952 x2257

Aflac.

Janelle Wilberding
Benefits Advisor

"Providing an additional layer of
financial protection in the event of
injury or illness"

Specializing in individual and
small business group insurance
(406) 781-7504

Janelle_Wilberding@us.aflac.com



WE'RE HIRING

AD SALES EXECUTIVES

**BE YOURSELF. BRING YOUR PASSION.
WORK WITH PURPOSE.**

- Paid Training
- Some Travel
- Work-Life Balance
- Full-Time with Benefits
- Serve Your Community



Contact us at careers@4lpi.com
www.4lpi.com/careers

**SUPPORT OUR
ADVERTISERS!**



PIERCE

FLOORING
WHOLESALE DIRECT

1204 7th St. South
(406) 727-3832

www.pierceflooringwholesale.com

We've Missed You!

Welcome Back to Mass

Stay connected to our faith community no matter where you are
by signing up to get our bulletin delivered straight to your email!

www.ParishesOnline.com

TIRE RAMA

EST. 1977

More Than Just a Tire Store

1627 3rd St NW

406-761-4200



For ad info. call 1-800-950-9952 • www.4lpi.com

Corpus Christi Catholic Parish, Great Falls, MT

A 4C 05-1746