



Month: November: Ordinary Time continues until November 30th.

Traditionally, the season of Advent begins four Sundays before Christmas, this year the first Sunday of Advent is November 30, 2014. The season of Advent is the time to prepare for the coming of Christ at Christmas and the start of the liturgical year in the Catholic Church. Advent activities help us stay focused on renewing our spiritual life. The color for the Season of Advent is violet.

Theme: Church

“The Church has no other light than Christ’s; .the Church is like the moon, all its light reflected from the sun.” (CCC#748) When we talk of Church, we are speaking of ourselves. The Church is the place “where the Spirit flourishes” in the midst of God’s people (CCC #749). The word church comes from the Latin word ecclesia, “to call together” and means a “gathering of people”. Church also means the universal community of believers. Finally, church is used to designate the liturgical assembly.

Sacrament: Eucharist

“The Sunday celebration of the Lord’s Day and His Eucharist is at the heart of the Church’s life.” When we attend Mass we are following the teachings of the Third Commandment: “Remember the Sabbath day, and keep it holy (Exodus 20:8). As Catholics, we look at the Sabbath in three key ways: Honor the day of rest, understand why Sunday Eucharist is essential and participate more fully in the Eucharist. Advent is a good time to renew our commitment to church and the Sabbath.

Here is a prayer you may find helpful: “O Jesus, see the world with my eyes. Hear the world with my ears. Speak to people with my mouth. Touch people with my hands. Love others with my heart. Walk in my feet that I may bear your presence wherever I go. Make my whole being a transparency of your presence. Amen.”

Family Activity: Advent Traditions to do at home.

Advent means “coming”, and puts the world back into the time of darkness before Christ. We are waiting for the Light which is Christ, waiting for life. Advent is a time to enrich the heart, and a time for internal growth as we eagerly look forward to the coming of Christ. If you do not already do so, consider using the Advent Wreath as part of your Christmas preparations. The Advent Wreath candles remind us daily that Christ is the Light of the world. The circular shape shows us that God is eternal, that is, he had no beginning and will live forever. The evergreens remind us that God never changes. Three of the candles for the wreath are purple, the fourth one, which is lit on the third Sunday of Advent, is rose or pink to express our joy that Christmas is so close. Begin lighting your Advent Wreath on the eve of the First Sunday of Advent, or for 2014, November 29th. Each Sunday one more candle is lit until all four are lit to announce the celebration of Christ’s birth draws near.

The Jesse Tree is another seasonal tradition which recalls the family tree of Christ. The “tree” can be made out of many things. You can use an actual tree limb, one from an apple tree, or it can be done on a piece of felt or burlap or a large piece of construction paper. All members of the family can participate in making symbols from construction paper or light cardboard to represent the genealogy of Christ.

Saint Information: St. of the Month: St. Frances Xavier Cabrini-Feast Day: November 13. She was the first United States citizen to be canonized.