

"Be Watchful! Be Alert!"

MT 13:33





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Mass Intentions *for the Week*

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 3, 2023

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2

The Mass of Anticipation for 1st Sunday of Advent

4:00PM Josephine Ricci—Memorial

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 3

Frist Sunday of Advent

7:30 AM Evelyn & Michael Simon—Memorial

9:00AM Peter & Gloria Monti—Memorial

10:30AM Emily Devlin—66th Anniversary

5:00PM The Parishioners of Our Lady of Mercy

MONDAY, DECEMBER 4

Advent Weekday: St. John Damascene, Priest & Doctor of the Church

7:30AM Mary Jo Duffy—2nd Anniversary

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 5

Weekday

7:30AM Salvatore DiStefano—33rd Anniversary

WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6

Advent Weekday; St. Nicholas, Bishop

7:30AM Everett Martin—Memorial

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7

St. Ambrose, Bishop & Doctor of the Church

7:30AM Beatrice Alfano—Memorial

Vigil of the Immaculate Conception of the BVM

5:00PM The Parishioners of Our Lady of Mercy

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 8

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the BVM

7:30AM D'cesd. Of Gallogy & McGarry Families—Mem.

9:00AM Ryan Casey—Memorial

7:00PM Jean A. Collard —Memorial

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 9

Advent Weekday; St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin

8:30AM Richard Lutfy—Memorial

The Mass of Anticipation for 2nd Sunday of Advent

4:00PM Jeanne Scott—Memorial

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10

Second Sunday of Advent

7:30AM Norman & Ann Perkins—Memorial

9:00AM Irene Sullivan—2nd Anniversary

10:30AM Margaret B. Devlin—48th Anniversary

5:00PM The Parishioners of Our Lady of Mercy





Dear Parishioners:

The Holy Season of Advent begins this Sunday. It is a season of prayerful preparation that directs our hearts and minds to Christ's second coming at the end of time. It is a time of joyful anticipation for the anniversary of Our Lord's birth on Christmas.

From the Church's earliest days, people have been fascinated by Jesus' promise to return. But the scripture readings during Advent tell us not to waste our time with predictions. Advent is not about speculation.

Our Advent readings call us to be alert and ready, not weighed down and distracted by the cares of this world. Like Lent, the liturgical color for Advent is purple since both are seasons that prepare us for great feast days. Advent also includes an element of penance in the sense of preparing, quieting, and disciplining our hearts for the full joy of Christmas.

However, more than any other season of the year, it is rooted in the virtue of hope. For Catholics, the new year begins not on January 1 but on the First Sunday of Advent, the day the Church begins her annual new cycle of Scripture readings and worship.

The season of Advent, deriving from the Latin verb *advenire*, meaning "to come" or "to arrive," has a two-fold purpose: first, to remind us of the birth of Jesus in Bethlehem and all that it implied for the salvation of the world; and, second, to ready us for Christ's second coming at the end of time as king and judge of creation.

For Christians, the virtue of hope enables us to face the

burdens of daily life, no matter how heavy.

In his 2007 Encyclical *Spe Salvi* ("Saved in Hope"), Pope Benedict reminds us that "*the present, even if it is arduous, can be lived and accepted if it leads towards a goal if we can be sure of this goal, and if this goal is great enough to justify the effort of the journey.*"

Faith in Jesus Christ leads us to hope for eternal life. Christ's life gives our lives meaning. If we believe in Jesus Christ, we will have confidence in the future, no matter how bleak some days or problems seem. In the end, Jesus has already won our salvation and the happiness that comes with it.

The virtue that Christians call hope is not a warm, fuzzy feeling, a sunny disposition, or a habit of optimism. The great French Catholic novelist Georges Bernanos once wrote that optimism has nothing to do with hope. Optimism is often foolish and naïve — a preference to see good where the evidence is undeniably bad. In fact, Bernanos called optimism a "*sly form of selfishness, a method of isolating oneself from the unhappiness of others.*"

Hope is a very different thing. It's a choice to trust in God while judging ourselves and the world with unsentimental clarity inspired and reinforced by God's grace. "*The highest form of hope,*" Bernanos said, "*is despair, overcome.*"

Jesus Christ was born in a stable and died brutally on the cross not to make a good world even better but to save a broken world from itself at the cost of his own blood. Such is the real

world, our daily world, the world of Christian hope.

As we ready ourselves for the joy of Christmas this year, let's live Advent fully and well. Remember, even amidst a world often cold and cruel, with war and violence, suffering and pain, why, as Christians, we're called to be joyful. In the end, Christmas is not about the gifts, the carols, or the parties, though all these things are wonderful signs of joy. Christmas is about the birth of the Messiah, Jesus Christ, who brings joy, hope, and real meaning to a world that needs redemption. In Christ, and only in him, is our hope.

We celebrate the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Friday, December 8. It is a Holy Day of Obligation, and the Mass Schedule is: Vigil Mass at 5:00PM on Thursday, and on the Holy Day, Friday, Masses are at 7:30AM, 9:00AM, and 7:00PM.

St. Pope John Paul II said of this great Solemnity: "*The Immaculate Conception shines like a beacon of light for humanity in all the ages. It guides us to believe and hope in God, in his salvation, and in eternal life.*"

I am making my annual retreat with the Trappists this week at Saint Joseph's Abbey in Spencer, Massachusetts. Please pray for me. Remember to get to Mass on the Holy Day! Do good. Be well. God Bless. It's Advent! Pray for the Lord's coming and prepare the way!

Father Healey

The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

A Holy Day of Obligation



Holy Day Mass Schedule at OLM

Thursday, December 7

Vigil Mass at 5:00 PM

Friday, December 8

Masses at 7:30am, 9:00am & 7:00PM

Pray
For Our

Deceased

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In your charity please pray for the repose of the souls of the faithful departed especially **Ryan P. Casey** whose Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated here last week.

Rest In Peace

Prepare
the
Way



Weekly Collection

November 19, 2023

Weekly.....\$9,120.00

EFT.....\$6,847.00

Total=\$15,967.00

Outreach.....\$535.00

CCHD.....\$2,483.00

November 20, 2022

Weekly.....\$15,766.00

November 26, 2023

Weekly.....\$9,026.00

EFT.....\$4,488.00

Total=\$13,514.00

Outreach.....\$312.00

Annual Collection (To Date).....\$109,159.00

November 27, 2022

Weekly.....\$13,402.00

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Second Collections

This Week: Building & Grounds Collection

Next Week: Retired Religious Collection

Every penny counts!



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OLM FAITH FORMATION

UPDATE

First Communion Class Schedule

Sunday, December 3

2024 Confirmation Class Schedule

Sunday, December 10

Sunday, December 17

For questions and more information please contact Mr. Jeremy Long, Director of Faith Formation at 884-4968 or email at faithformation@olmparish.org



Calendar

- **Monday, December 4:** Advent Confessions at 12:45pm
- **Wednesday, December 6:** St. Nicholas Day! St. Nicholas visit to the school
- **Friday, December 8:** Immaculate Conception Holy Day Mass at 9:00am (formal uniforms)
- **Saturday, December 9:** Youth Ministry Meeting at 6:30pm

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• **OLM Food Pantry** is always in need of food items and paper goods for the members of our local community. Please place all donated items in the box in the vestibule of Church or the box on the porch of Mercy House. **All food items should be unexpired and non-perishable.** We also are in need of paper goods (paper towels, napkins). Thank you for your support.

• **OLM Bereavement Group:** Our next meeting is on **Thursday, December 7, 2023 at 4:00pm** in Mercy House. All those adults experiencing sorrow, grief or loneliness are most welcome to attend for prayer and discussion.

• **For more information,** please contact the OLM Outreach Director, Doug Green at 401-884-4410 or via email at outreach@olmparish.org



**Rite of Christian Initiation
for Adults**

Looking to join the Catholic Church? Want to learn more about the Catholic Faith? Interested in Baptism, Communion or Confirmation?

Come explore the Catholic Faith and prepare for the Sacraments of Initiation at our RCIA Class. Classes begin this month. For more information, contact Father Mahoney at 401-884-4968 or by email: associatepastor@olmparish.org

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ALTAR SERVERS

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 the piercing cold.**

**In that hour vouchsafe,
I beseech Thee, 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.**

Pray 15 Times per Day Amen Pray 15 Times per Day



 **Advent Wreath**

AN ADVENT wreath symbolizes our longing for the coming of Christ. The wreath is a circle of evergreen branches into which are set four candles. Traditionally three candles are violet and one is rose, but four violet or four white candles may also be used.

The wreath symbolizes many things. Evergreens signify God's enduring promise of redemption, evident like green branches in the midst of snow. The circle signifies our hope for the return of Christ, whose Kingdom will have no end. The colors of the candles match the traditional colors of the vesture for the four Sundays of Advent. Violet garments signify our penitent hope for salvation. The rose color, which may be worn on Advent's Third Sunday, signals that the season is nearly over—joy is at hand!

The wreath's most luminous symbol is its growing light. One candle is lit on the First Sunday of Advent, two on the Second, three on the Third and all four on the Fourth. In the northern hemisphere, Advent comes at a time when the days decrease to their shortest length. As the hours of darkness increase, we light more candles on the wreath. The wreath, which symbolizes the coming of Christ, grows in intensity as the anniversary of Jesus' birth draws near.

The Advent wreath may be used at home or at church. It should be blessed on the First Sunday of Advent after the homily at one Mass, at evening prayer Saturday night, or during a prayer service including biblical readings and Advent songs. At home, a family member can bless the wreath. It may be lit during the evening meal, to remind everyone of the true meaning of this holy season.

Bulletin Inserts for the Liturgical Life of the Parish: Devotions and Customs
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