

Advent Liturgical Living

“The Events that come to mind when we say “Christmas,” “Easter,” “Pentecost,” are so tremendous that their commemoration cannot be celebrated in a single day each. Weeks are needed. First, weeks of preparation, of becoming attuned in body and soul, and then weeks of celebration. This goes back to an age when people still had time -- time to live, time to enjoy. In our own day, we face the puzzling fact that the more time-saving gadgets we invent, the more new buttons to push in order to “save hours of work” -- the less time we actually have. We have no more time to read books; we can only afford digests. We have no time to walk a quarter of a mile; we have to hop into a car. We have no time to make things by hand... The atmosphere of “hurry up, let’s go” does not provide the necessary leisure in which to anticipate and celebrate a feast. **But as soon as people stop celebrating they really do not live any more** -- they are being lived, as it were. The alarming question arises: what is being done with all the time that is constantly being saved? Only the Church throws light onto the gloomy prospects of modern man - Holy Mother Church - for she belongs, herself, to a realm that has its past and present in Time, but its future in the World Without End.”

~ Maria Augusta Trapp, “Around the Year with the Trapp Family”

It seems as soon as the clock strikes midnight on Halloween, the world declares it “Christmas!” but there is a whole season in there of waiting and preparing. We’re reminded of the way that a pregnant mother spends 9 months getting ready for the baby to be born and it’s only on the day of birth that we announce, “Happy Birthday!” So, what is Advent and how can we celebrate it as Catholics, especially amidst a secular backdrop of commercialism and instant gratification?

How Can You Have a Good Advent?

Advent is a season of preparation – 4 weeks to prepare our hearts and home to receive Christ. It is a season of hope and of longing, of joyful expectation and of peaceful preparation. We are reminded in the lectionary readings to remain vigilant, to wake up, and to stay awake. Advent has been called a “little Lent,” because it traditionally has included a period of increased prayer, fasting, and good works. Many symbols and traditions are associated with Advent, especially the Advent Wreath with its four colored candles (three purple and one pink), but also nativity scenes, special Advent music, food, processions, and other traditions that may vary from one culture or region to the next.

There is no right or wrong way to celebrate Advent in your home (domestic Church) but hopefully this guide will aid you in finding some ancient and some new traditions. Don’t feel like you have to do it all. Pick one or two things that you think will be meaningful and good for your family to carry through the season as a way to focus in on the coming of Christ. Use the calendar to organize your preparations and map out a weekly rhythm punctuated by special days or activities.

➔ PRO TIP – Keep Christmas out of Advent by switching your playlist to anticipatory songs like these:

Advent Playlist and Hymns:

You Heavens, Dew Drop From Above

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O Savior, Heaven’s Portal Rend

Maria Walks Amid the Thorn

Blessed Mother of the Savior

O Christmas Tree

O Come All Ye Faithful

Behold, Behold He Cometh

Hark! A Mystic Voice is Sounding

Savior of the Nations, Come

Lo! He Comes, With Clouds

Descending

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus

Creator of the Stars and Night

O Come, Divine Messiah

Lo! How a Rose E’er Blooming

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silent

The Angel Gabriel from Heaven Came

People, Look East

Ave Maria

It's Beginning to Look a Lot Like Christmas

I'll Be Home for Christmas

Christmas is Coming

Silver Bells

Santa Claus is Coming to Town

Traditional Advent and Christmas Season Customs

Catholic New Year

The beginning of Advent marks the beginning of a new liturgical season. We will have a new rotation of lectionary readings at Mass, this year turning to cycle A on November 27th. Much like the turning of the page from Dec 31st to Jan 1st, we can gather friends and family around for a new [Catholic] year's eve party and toast. Unlike calendar NYE, Advent always begins on a Sunday, so Saturday night is a good night to stay up late and ring in the new year with food and special drinks. You can also set resolutions and choose a Saint for the new year to journey with you and/or your family. (Advice from: Catholic All Year Compendium)

Advent Wreath

Advent wreaths bring an importance and focus for each Sunday of Advent. They can be paper and handmade or store-bought beauties. Pair your wreath with readings and devotions to make Sundays a special time this Advent or gather round it each night and light the candles as a family, perhaps at the dinner table. There are so many symbolic elements that point us to the reason for the season – Christ and His coming into the world.

[Catholic Icing Advent Wreath 101](#)
[Catholic Sprouts Advent Resources](#)

Advent Calendar

Although not there isn't a specific religious element to it, advent calendars create excitement and anticipation as we near Christmas. They typically begin on Dec 1 and count down the 25 days with a fun picture, little chocolate, or even a lego character displayed through little windows in a cardboard box or wooden frame. You can buy one in store, make a paper chain, use little pockets to hide nativity figurines that you add to your display each day, or families sometimes even wrap up Christmas books to be unwrapped and read each day as we anxiously await the Christ. The general idea is to use the calendar as a daily activity to show outwardly the inward anticipation.

Christkindl / "Advent Angels"

The names of all family members are placed in a hat and each member draws out a name secretly. During the advent season, each family member will care for their chosen person with little secret acts of kindness. They might make a bed, give a disguised note that a rosary was prayed in their name, or fold laundry.

"The person whose name I have drawn and who is under my care becomes for me the helpless little Christ Child in the manger; and as I am performing these many little acts of love and consideration for someone in the family I am really doing them for the Infant of Bethlehem, according to the word, "And he that shall receive one such little child in my name, receives me."" (From Around the Year with the Trapp Family)

O Antiphons

The O Antiphons are Magnificat antiphons sung or recited at Vespers (the sunset or evening prayers of the Church) on the last seven days of Advent (December 17 - 23). The origin of the O Antiphons can be traced back to a 6th century Benedictine Abbey and by the 8th century they had been incorporated into the liturgical rhythm of the Church. The O Antiphons bring the Advent preparations to a joyful conclusion. It's sort of like a holy week at the end of Advent, leading us to Christmas and the gift of the Incarnation.

[Family Feast and Feria the Great O Antiphons](#)

Las Posadas

In other cultures, referred to as The Golden Nights. In Spain and Mexico, the Posada is the period of nine days before Christmas from December 16 - 24. On the nights of Las Posadas, families walk in procession knocking at doors asking for entrance just as the Holy Family did. They are refused. Only on Christmas Eve does the door open and families enjoy warm drinks and refreshments while children are treated to fun with a Pinata. This can be duplicated in the family home with the doors of the bedrooms closed and Mother, Father, and youngest child seeking admittance, while all other siblings refuse admittance...until the last. It would be traditional to carry around a statue or piece of original artwork of the Holy Family, St. Joseph or the Blessed Virgin (traditions in Europe) as you bring them with you seeking admittance for the Holy Night.

– From *Wildflowers and Marbles*

[Tomie dePaola's book The Night of Las Posadas](#)

Jesse Tree

The Jesse Tree takes you through the lineage and major events leading up to Christ's birth using scripture reading, reflection, and an image/ornament for each day of Advent. The symbols on the ornaments remind us of the Biblical character or event and are hung on a traditional Jesse tree (bare branches) or even a Christmas tree. They can be printed and colored, hand-drawn, store bought, or even fridge magnets.

[Catholic Inspired Free Printables](#)

[Of the Hearth DIY Ornaments](#)

[Catholic Icing Jess Tree Resources](#)

Mary on the Mantle

A playful and anticipatory activity with kids to replace something like "Elf on the Shelf". Each day Mary is moved around your house as she prepares for her new baby. Mary is busy "nesting" and doing simple, ordinary tasks. When the children find her in the morning, Mary delivers a small act of kindness that they can perform that day. Mary can be found in little vignettes of praying, having a baby shower, sweeping, laying out the Advent wreath, or doing the dishes.

[Be A Heart Mary on the Mantle](#)

Straw for the Manger

We begin advent with an empty manger, much like our own hearts, ready to receive Jesus. In order to make a soft bed for baby Jesus, families make bedding from pieces of straw or yarn that represent the prayers, good works, devotions, and sacrifices performed during the season of Advent. At the end of each day, you can put in a piece of straw for each good deed and watch as the bed grows soft with your holy works, ready for Jesus. You can make your own little manger from craft wood and use a peg doll for baby Jesus.

12 Days of Christmas

Just like the song, Christmas lasts more than one day for Catholics! We celebrate it as an entire octave (like Easter) and continue until the Epiphany 12 days later on January 6th (this feast is sometimes observed/moved to the nearest Sunday). Carry on the feasting (after the Advent "fasting") by having little gifts to unwrap each day, making cookies, keeping up all your decorations, hosting Christmas or Epiphany parties, singing Christmas songs, or any general celebrating!

The Traveling Wisemen

Between Christmas and the Epiphany, you can move the three wisemen from your nativity scene around the house. Each morning the children wake up to find them journeying towards the manger. On the feast of the Epiphany they might even leave a small gift for the children (in many Hispanic countries, kids leave their shoes out – with hay for the camels – and they are given presents). Take this time to learn about and discuss the three magi, their gifts, and the countless epiphanies (manifestations of the Divine) in our own lives.

Epiphany House Blessing

A blessings of the home is traditionally done on the feast of the Epiphany. The family gathers at the doorway to the home and says a prayer. Following the prayer, using blessed chalk, the leader chalks above the frame of the door the initials of the 3 Magi – Caspar, Melchior, Balthasar - framed by the number of the year and all figures connected by a cross: 20 + C + M + B + 23

The Epiphany typically marks the end of the Christmas season (though some continue celebrating for 40 days until the Feast of the Presentation of Jesus – Feb 2). You might even make a traditional King Cake to crown the day!

Traditional Saint Feast Day Celebrations

St Andrew (Nov 30)

The beginning of Advent is always determined by St. Andrew's Day. The Sunday nearest to his feast is always the First Sunday in Advent. If November 30th falls on a Monday through Wednesday, Advent begins the Sunday preceding; if it falls on Thursday through Saturday Advent begins the Sunday following. You can celebrate his feast by reading about his life, snacking on fish or goldfish, and cooking Andreasherzen (St Andrew's Hearts) pancakes or waffles in the shape of hearts. It is piously believed that whoever recites the "novena" prayer fifteen times a day from the feast of St. Andrew (30th November) until Christmas will obtain what is asked. (Imprimatur +MICHAEL AUGUSTINE, Archbishop of New York; New York, February 6, 1897)

[Shower of Roses – Celebrating St Andrew](#)

St Nicholas (Dec 6)

While families might choose to forgo or "do" Santa differently, St Nicholas was a real person (born 270, bishop of Myra, attended the Council of Nicaea) and Saint with rich traditions and interesting legends that are worthy of exploration. To celebrate his feast, some children will write letters the night before and leave them in their shoes (near the chimney or front door) for St Nick to collect. He often replaces them with little goodies like chocolate coins, oranges, or even pajamas. Today might be a good day to take a picture with Santa or make St Nicholas cookies (speculaas). Consider watching "Nicholas: the Boy Who Became Santa" or reading some books to bring this Saint to life for your family.

[Catholic Icing – St Nicholas Day Ideas](#)

St Ambrose (Dec 7)

Born in 340, there was a legend that as a baby a swarm of bees settled on his face and left behind a drop of honey. It was thought to indicate his future eloquence or "honey-tongue" as he preached the Good News. A holy man whose example brought St Augustine to the faith, he is declared a Doctor of the Church. He has an association with candlemakers (beeswax) so it would be fitting liturgical living to do a candle-related craft or activity on this day as we ask for his intercession and learn about his remarkable life. In the kitchen, anything with honey would be appropriate and you might also consider making an ambrosia "salad" with canned fruit, marshmallows, and whipped cream. (Advice from: Catholic All Year Compendium)

Immaculate Conception of Mary (Dec 8)

A beautiful solemnity in Advent remembering the immaculate conception of our Mother Mary. One way to celebrate this day is by going to Mass and having a dinner of all white foods (the liturgical color), such as chicken alfredo, cauliflower, and white dinner rolls – maybe meringue cookies or cream cheese mints for dessert. Prayers like the Litany of Loreto or singing Marian hymns like Ave Maria or Immaculate Mary would be a great fit!

[Catholic Icing – Craft for Immaculate Conception](#)

St Juan Diego (Dec 9) & Our Lady of Guadalupe (Dec 12)

The story of the miraculous apparition of Our Lady to Juan Diego is truly remarkable – roses, an image on a *tilma*, and overwhelming conversions by an increase in faith. Watch "Juan Diego: Messenger of Guadalupe" or another resource on FORMED.org to learn all about this feast. Consider celebrating this Mexican Saint with authentic Mexican food like tamales – maybe even coming together for a *tamalada* where families bring the parts of tamales and assemble together. Make Mexican wedding cookies (snowballs) or *polvorones de canelé* for dessert. Drink Mexican hot chocolate. Make an apron with the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe on it to wear with all the cooking too or enjoy coloring pages of the amazing image.

[Catholic Icing – Celebrating Juan Diego and Our Lady](#)

Our Lady of Loretto (Dec 10)

The Virgin Mary was from Nazareth in Galilee and has a childhood home with her parents, Sts Ann and Joachim. This home is where she grew up, made arrangements to marry Joseph, and received the angel Gabriel. The story goes that after the Ascension, the apostles converted her home in Nazareth into a chapel which was discovered in 336 by St Helena who had a basilica built around it. When war in the Holy Land threatened the house, it is said that angels carried it to Loreto, Italy where it is today. It might have been a family with the last name Angels, or the real non-corporeal thing, but one way to celebrate this feast and title of Our Lady is to create gingerbread houses! Learn more about the house at Loreto while using graham crackers or homemade gingerbread dough to construct a fun display house or edible treat. (Advice from: Catholic All Year Compendium)

[Catholic Culture Article on Our Lady of Loreto](#)

St Lucy (Dec 13)

The name Lucy or Lucia means "light" which makes this day a particularly welcome celebration for a dark mid-December day. She was a martyr under Diocletian because her fiancé denounced her to the government as a Christian. One of the most familiar celebrations associated with Lucy is the European tradition of girls dressing up like Lucy (a white dress with red sashes) march in procession carrying palms (for her martyrdom). They wear on their heads a crown of evergreens, lingonberry sprigs, and lit, tall, white candles. A traditional breakfast sweet on this day are *lussebullar* (Lucy buns) with raisins representing her eyes (regular cinnamon rolls are a great substitute in a pinch). This might also be a fun day to drive around and look at Christmas lights. (Advice from: Catholic All Year Compendium)

St John of the Cross (Dec 14)

A Spaniard from the 16th century, great poet, friend and fellow mystic of St Teresa of Avila, St John of the Cross is well known for founding the Discalced (barefoot) Carmelites. One misadventure was his imprisonment in a cell for nine months where he could only eat bread, water, and salt fish (which could make a great snack today!). For dinner you might serve up a Spanish soup like the Castilian *sopa de ajo* (garlic soup) and for dessert, peanut butter kiss cookies. The brown peanut butter cookie reminds us of the wood of the cross and the chocolate kiss on top is for St John's love for it (brown and black are also the colors of the Carmelite habit). Consider reading his poems and venerating the cross during family prayer today. (Advice from: Catholic All Year Compendium)

First Week of Advent

Nov 27	<i>First Sunday of Advent</i> “Stir Up Sunday”	<i>Making and Preparing Home:</i> - Hang/put out Advent wreath - Set out Crib with basket of hay beside it for good deeds - for each good deed a child may soften Our Lord’s creche with a piece of hay. - Set up Jesse Tree - Set out Advent books/reading basket - Advent music plays	<i>Advent Prayers - First Week:</i> Let us pray. Stir up Thy might, we beg Thee, O Lord, and come, so that we may escape through Thy protection and be saved by Thy help from the dangers that threaten us because of our sins. Who lives and reigns for ever. Amen.
Nov 28	<i>Monday</i>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Nov 29	<i>Tuesday</i>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Nov 30	<i>Wednesday</i> Feast of St Andrew, Apostle	<i>Begin St. Andrew’s Novena</i> Recite the following prayer 15 times daily through Christmas: 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, through the merits of Our Savior Jesus Christ, and of His Blessed Mother. Amen	Resource: Shower of Roses – Celebrating St Andrew <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Dec 1	<i>Thursday</i>	Begin Advent Calendar (if doing) <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Dec 2	<i>Friday</i>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Dec 3	<i>Saturday</i> Memorial of St. Francis Xavier, Priest	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	- FORMED.org: CHILDREN’S VIDEO Francis Xavier and the Samurai’s Lost Treasure (33m) <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Second Week of Advent

Dec 4	<p><i>Second Sunday of Advent</i></p> <p>St Barbara St John Damascene</p>	<p>- Begin Novena to Our Lady of Guadalupe</p> <p>Advent Custom: <i>St. Barbara's Branch</i> - Snip branches of fruit trees on the Feast of St. Barbara and bring inside to place in a vase. These should bloom by Christmas and are used to decorate the Christmas Crib.</p>	<p><i>Advent Prayers - Second Week:</i> Let us pray. O Lord, stir up our hearts that we may prepare for Thy only begotten Son, that through His coming we may be made worthy to serve Thee with pure souls. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Dec 5	<p><i>Monday</i></p>	<p><i>Making and preparing home:</i> - Lay out shoes or stockings for St Nicholas to fill after the kids are in bed (traditional gifts include gold chocolate coins, oranges, new shoes, books). - Have children write letters to St Nicholas for him to collect on his feast day.</p>	<p><i>Advent Custom:</i> Toast the Vigil of St. Nicholas with Bishop's Wine <i>In the Kitchen:</i> Bishop's Wine Heat the following and serve hot! Bottle of red burgundy wine $\frac{3}{4}$ - 1 cup sugar $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cinnamon grated orange wine</p>
Dec 6	<p><i>Tuesday</i> Feast of St Nicholas, Bishop</p>	<p><i>In the Kitchen:</i> Speculaas or St Nicholas cookies</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>- FORMED.org: CHILDREN'S VIDEO Nicholas: The Boy Who Became Santa (27m) Resource: https://www.stnicholascenter.org/how-to-celebrate/resources/recipes/cookies/cookies-traditional-spice</p>
Dec 7	<p><i>Wednesday</i> Memorial of St Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor of the Church</p>	<p><i>In the Kitchen:</i> Make Ambrosia salad <i>Penitential Prayer of St Ambrose of Milan</i> (AD 339-397): O Lord, who hast mercy upon all, take away from me my sins, and mercifully kindle in me the fire of thy Holy Spirit. Take away from me the heart of stone, and give me a heart of flesh, a heart to love and adore Thee, a heart to delight in Thee, to follow and enjoy Thee, for Christ's sake. Amen.</p>	<p>Resource: https://ascensionpress.com/pages/prayer-of-st-ambrose</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Dec 8	<p><i>Thursday</i> Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary</p>	<p>Attend Mass for this Holy Day: St Luke's at 11:00am, 6:30pm</p> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>-FORMED.org – CHILDREN'S VIDEO: Bernadette: The Princess of Lourdes (30min)</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Dec 9	<p><i>Friday</i> Feast of St Juan Diego Cuauhtlatatzin</p>	<p><i>In the kitchen:</i> Make tamales for dinner. Better yet, organize a <i>tamalada</i> where families come with their separate prepared parts of the tamales and they are assembled together in community.</p>	<p>- FORMED.org: CHILDREN'S VIDEO Juan Diego: The Messenger of Guadalupe (36m) (also in Spanish)</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Dec 10	<p><i>Saturday</i> Feast of Our Lady of Loreto</p>	<p><i>In the kitchen:</i> Make gingerbread houses to remember the house of Our Lady (Loreto). <i>Prayer:</i> The Litany of Our Lady of Loreto</p>	<p>Resource: https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/devotions/litany-of-loreto-246</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Third Week of Advent

Dec 11	<p><i>Third Sunday of Advent (Gaudete Sunday)</i></p> <p>Our Lady Queen of Angels</p>	<p><i>Rejoice!</i> We are more than halfway through Advent and getting close to Christmas. You can add Mary and Joseph to your manger if you omitted them at the beginning of Advent (the journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem is about 100 miles now!)</p> <p><i>In the kitchen:</i> A traditional “Bambinelli” Sunday meal is a British meat pie (they were typically made in an oval or rectangle, like a manger, and the wavy crust on top was like swaddling clothes). A pink dessert is a fun addition (like pink jello, pink decorated cookies) for the liturgical color today.</p>	<p><i>Advent Prayers - Third Week:</i> Let us pray. We humbly beg Thee, O Lord, to listen to our prayers; and by the grace of Thy coming bring light into our darkened minds Who lives and reigns forever. Amen.</p> <p>FORMED.org – VIDEO: Christmas as “Christ’s Mass”: The Manger and the Eucharist by Dr. Michael Barber (29min)</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Dec 12	<p><i>Monday</i> Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe</p>	<p><i>In the Kitchen:</i> Mexican Hot Chocolate <i>Making and Preparing Home:</i> Place roses under a statue of Our Lady in remembrance of her gift of roses to St. Juan Diego</p>	<p>FORMED.org – VIDEO: Guadalupe: The Miracle and the Message (58 mins)</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Dec 13	<p><i>Tuesday</i> Feast of St Lucy, Virgin and Martyr</p>	<p><i>In the kitchen:</i> Make “Lucy buns” to serve with raisins for eyes. <i>Making and Preparing Home:</i> Girls can dress up in white dresses with red sashes and a traditional Lucy crown (topped with white candles). On this feast of light, families may consider visiting houses decorated with lights.</p>	<p>Resource: https://www.catholicicing.com/st-lucy/</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Dec 14	<p><i>Wednesday</i> Feast of St John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor of the Church</p>	<p><i>In the kitchen:</i> Make peanut butter kiss cookies (to represent the wood of the cross and St John’s sweet love for it)</p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Dec 15	<p><i>Thursday</i></p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Dec 16	<p><i>Friday</i></p>	<p>Begin Christmas Novena (Dec 16-24)</p> <p>Las Posadas Begins (9 days before Christmas)</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>Resource: https://www.praymorenovenas.com/christmas-novena FORMED.org – VIDEO: The Christmas Novena Catholic All Year Kendra Tierney (3 min) - Nine Days to Christmas, A Story of Mexico by Marie Hall Ets & Aurora Labastida - The Night of Las Posadas by Tomie de Paola</p>
Dec 17	<p><i>Saturday</i></p>	<p><i>“O Antiphons” Begin</i> <i>O Sapientia</i> O Wisdom, who came from the mouth of the Most High, reaching from end to end and ordering all things mightily and sweetly: come, and redeem us with outstretched arm.</p>	<p>Resource: https://maryellenb.typepad.com/files/o-antiphons-prayer-companionm2012.pdf</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Fourth Week of Advent

Dec 18	<i>Fourth Sunday of Advent</i>	<p><i>℟ Adonai</i></p> <p>O Lord and Ruler of the House of Israel, who appeared to Moses in the flame of the burning bush and gave him the law on Sinai: come and redeem us with outstretched arm.</p> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>- FORMED.org: CHILDREN’S VIDEO Lukas Storyteller: The True Meaning of Christmas</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Dec 19	<i>Monday</i>	<p><i>℟ Radix Jesse</i></p> <p>O Root of Jesse, who stands for an ensign of the people, before whom kings shall keep silence and unto whom the Gentiles shall make supplication: come to deliver us, and tarry not.</p> <hr/> <hr/>	<p>- FORMED.org: CHILDREN’S VIDEO: Kristoph & the First Christmas Tree: A Legend of St. Boniface (7min)</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Dec 20	<i>Tuesday</i>	<p><i>℟ Clavis David</i></p> <p>O Key of David, and Scepter of the House of Israel, who opens and no man shuts; who shuts and no man opens: come, and bring forth the captive from his prison, he who sits in darkness and in the shadow of death.</p> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Dec 21	<i>Wednesday</i> Feast of St Peter Canisius, Priest and Doctor of the Church	<p><i>℟ Oriens</i></p> <p>O Dawn of the East, brightness of the light eternal, and Sun of Justice: come, and enlighten them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.</p> <hr/>	<p>December 21 is usually the shortest day of the year, yet this day usually commenced the Christmas preparation of cleaning and baking. Although we no longer honor St. Thomas on this day (moved to July 3rd), we can still use this day as a reminder to put in exerted efforts and start finishing our external preparations for Christmas.</p>
Dec 22	<i>Thursday</i>	<p><i>℟ Rex Gentium</i></p> <p>O King of the Gentiles and their desired One, the Cornerstone that makes both one: come, and deliver man, whom You formed out of the dust of the earth.</p> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Dec 23	<i>Friday</i> Feast of St John Kanty, Priest	<p><i>℟ Emmanuel</i></p> <p>O Emmanuel, God with us, our King and Lawgiver, the expected of the nations and their Savior: come to save us, O Lord our God.</p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Dec 24	<i>Saturday</i> Feast of Sts. Adam and Eve, Our First Parents	<p><i>Evening of Las Posadas</i></p> <p><i>Enthroning the Child</i></p> <p>Baby Jesus is enthroned in the creche/nativity crib at midnight</p>	<p>“O happy fault that earned so great, so glorious a Redeemer!”</p> <p>Read the Gospel Account of the Nativity Luke 2:10 - 14</p>

Christmas

Dec 25	<p><i>Sunday</i></p> <p>The Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord CHRISTMAS</p>	<p><i>Attend Mass for this Holy Day:</i> St Luke's Christmas Eve 4:00pm, 6:00pm, 8:00pm; Christmas Day 12:00 midnight, 9:00am, 11:00am, 1:00pm (Bilingual Spanish)</p> <p><i>Making and Preparing Home:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Light the Manger Scene - Christmas music playing - Light the Christ Candle in Advent wreath 	<p>Resource: The True Meaning of Christmas by Fulton Sheen (available on FORMED.org)</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Dec 26	<p><i>Monday</i></p> <p>Feast of St Stephen, The First Martyr</p>	<p><i>St. Stephen's "Boxing" Day Custom:</i> In Medieval times, priests would empty and distribute the alms boxes on the day after Christmas</p> <p><i>Food for the Poor:</i> As a family, choose a gift for the poor on this Feast</p> <p><i>Sing:</i> Good King Wenceslaus (looked out on the Feast of Stephen)</p>	<p>- FORMED.org: CHILDREN'S VIDEO Brother Francis: O Holy Night, The King is Born: What Christmas Is About (26m)</p> <p>- Good King Wenceslaus (who looked out on the Feast of Stephen) by Geraldine McCaughrean</p> <p>- Good King Wenceslaus by Jamichael Henterly</p>
Dec 27	<p><i>Tuesday</i></p> <p>Feast of St John, Apostle and Evangelist</p>	<p><i>Tradition: St. John's Wine</i> Tradition holds that this Saint drank a cup of poisoned wine and survived</p> <p><i>Blessing of wine (In the Kitchen):</i> St. John's Wine (source <i>Cooking For Christ</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 2 cups red wine - 2 whole cloves - 2 sticks cinnamon - 1 cardamon seed - 1/4 teaspoon nutmeg <p>Boil spices in wine for about 5 minutes, strain and serve hot. Toast: "Drink the love of St. John" Christmas Tradition: Children with the name of "John" lights the tree</p>	<p>- FORMED.org: VIDEO Christmas Sacred Art with Ben Akers – The Adoration of the Shepherds (21 min)</p> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Dec 28	<p><i>Wednesday</i></p> <p>Feast of The Holy Innocents, Martyrs</p>	<p><i>Making and Preparing Home:</i> Set small white candles (representing Holy Innocents) around Christ candle tonight</p> <p><i>Prayer:</i> Light of Christ, Let me be a tiny flame reflecting Thee</p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Dec 29	<p><i>Thursday</i></p> <p>Fifth Day within the Octave of the Nativity of the Lord Feast of St. Thomas Becket of Canterbury</p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
Dec 30	<p><i>Friday</i></p> <p>Feast of the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary, and Joseph</p>	<p><i>Prayer:</i> O Lord Jesus Christ, who, by subjecting Yourself to Mary and Joseph consecrated family life with wonderful virtues, grant that, by their joint assistance, we may fashion our lives after the example of Your Holy Family, and obtain everlasting fellowship with it. Amen</p>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Dec 31	<i>Saturday</i> Seventh Day within the Octave Feast of St Sylvester I, Pope		
Jan 1	<i>Sunday</i> Solemnity of Mary, The Holy Mother of God (The Octave Day of the Nativity of the Lord)	Attend Mass on this Holy Day: St Luke's 5:00 Vigil, 9:00am, 11:00am, 1:00pm Publicly recite the <i>Veni, Creator</i> (Handbook of Indulgence #61) Luke 2:21 "And at the end of eight days, when He was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb."	
Jan 2	<i>Monday</i> Memorial of Sts Basil the Great and Gregory Nazianzen, Bishops and Doctors of the Church		
Jan 3	<i>Tuesday</i> The Most Holy Name of Jesus Feast of St Genevieve	<i>Craft:</i> Decorate the letters I H S in a most ornate way and place on the center of the table. To be authentic to the story of St. Bernardin, print the letters in gold on a blue background. Surround with flowers I H S is from the Latin - Jesus Hominum Salvator and means - Jesus, Savior of the World <i>Prayer:</i> Recite the Litany of the Holy Name of Jesus <i>In the Kitchen:</i> St. Genevieve is the patroness of Paris, France - cook something French for dinner	Resource: https://www.usccb.org/prayers/litany-holy-name-jesus
Jan 4	<i>Wednesday</i> Memorial of St Elizabeth Ann Seton		
Jan 5	<i>Thursday</i> Memorial of St John Neumann, Bishop		
Jan 6	<i>Friday</i> Feast of St Andre Bessette, Religious		
Jan 7	<i>Saturday</i> Feast of St Raymond of Penyafort, Priest		
Jan 8	<i>Sunday</i> The Solemnity of the EPIPHANY of the Lord (observed) *End of the Christmas Season*	<i>Making and Preparing Home:</i> - Move the Three Wise Men to the Creche - The Crib Enthroned - Transform the Creche into The Throne - Blessing of the Home with blessed chalk: 20 + C + M + B + 23 <i>In the Kitchen:</i> Twelfth Night/King Cake	<u>Epiphany songs for today:</u> We Three Kings of Orient Are Bethlehem of Noblest Cities As With Gladness Men of Old FORMED.org – VIDEO: Who Are the Magi? (6min)
Jan 9	<i>Monday</i> The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord		