

# The Catholic Messenger Advent Calendar *Two thousand twenty three*

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday								
<p><b>3</b></p>  <p>Begin this journey of Advent by blessing your Advent wreath. Light the first violet candle and sing "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel."</p>	<p><b>4</b></p>  <p>Use this Advent season to ready your heart for Jesus. In what ways can you improve your relationship with him?</p>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>Get your friends together and make Advent prayer books! Everyone should bring a small notebook and colorful pens. Share your favorite Advent prayers, Psalms or hymns, and write your favorites in your notebook!</p>	<p><b>6</b></p>  <p>In honor of Saint Nicholas whose memorial we celebrate today, consider ways that you can share your time, treasure and talent to assist those who are in need.</p>	<p><b>7</b></p>  <p>On this Memorial of Saint Ambrose, a bishop and great teacher of the faith, pray for all clergy and others charged with forming others in the faith of the Church.</p>	<p><b>8</b></p>  <p>Today is the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, patroness of the United States of America. It is a holy day of obligation. Offer your Mass intention today for the needs of the nation.</p>	<p><b>9</b></p>  <p>Make plans to receive the gift of God's mercy in the Sacrament of Penance during this Advent season. Check with your local parish for confession times or communal penance services.</p>								
<p><b>10</b></p> <p>On this Second Sunday of Advent, light two violet candles on your Advent wreath and ask God for the strength to be like John the Baptist, preparing the way of the Lord.</p>	<p><b>11</b></p> <p>"The liturgical Season of Advent ... invites us to go to the encounter with the Lord who comes through prayer, penitence and works of charity. Prepare yourselves to celebrate the birth of Jesus with assiduous listening to the Word of God and a generous response to his grace." — Pope Francis</p> 	<p><b>12</b></p> <p>Today is the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe who appeared to Juan Diego as a pregnant indigenous woman. Pray for all pregnant women and mothers and look for ways that you can walk with moms in need: Walking with Moms in Need.</p> 	<p><b>13</b></p> <p>In the bustle of the holiday season, spend some time this week in silence and prayer, possibly before the Blessed Sacrament, to prepare your heart to receive the Lord at Christmas.</p> 	<p><b>14</b></p> <p>The Christmas season presents us with opportunities to bring the Good News of Jesus into every human situation. When sending Christmas cards this year, choose a design that celebrates Jesus' birthday as opposed to a generic winter holiday.</p>	<p><b>15</b></p> <p>There are lots of great Advent books that take you deeper into the profound theology of Advent. God comes to us as a child, and this is amazing to think about! Read the <a href="#">Nov. 30 Catholic Messenger editorial</a> for ideas.</p>	<p><b>16</b></p>  <p>Las Posadas, a reenactment of Mary and Joseph seeking shelter before the birth of Jesus, traditionally begins today. Follow <i>The Catholic Messenger</i> on <a href="#">Facebook</a> or <a href="#">Instagram</a> for updates on where and when Las Posadas will take place in our diocese.</p>								
<p><b>17</b></p>  <p>On Gaudete Sunday, we light the rose (pink) candle on the Advent wreath and shift our reflection from "the Lord is coming" to "the Lord is near." We are more than halfway to Christmas day!</p>	<p><b>18</b></p>  <p>St. Francis of Assisi made the Christmas crèche, or manger, for Christmas Eve of 1223. Take time today to bless the family crèche.</p>	<p><b>19</b></p> <p>Advent is a season of waiting and anticipation of the birth of Christ. It can be easy to lose sight of this, focusing more on gift giving and receiving. Set aside time to pray with your family to refocus on the greatest gift.</p>	<p><b>20</b></p> <p>Christmas Masses are a wonderful opportunity to re-engage Catholics who have fallen away. Invite your fallen-away friends to attend Mass with you. Keep them, and all fallen away Catholics, in your prayers this season.</p>	<p><b>21</b></p> <p>"In some areas of our cities, there is still a lively sense of neighborhood. . . . Where people experience a closeness marked by gratitude, solidarity and reciprocity." <i>(Pope Francis, Fratelli Tutti, no. 152)</i></p> <p>Seek out volunteer opportunities in your neighborhood this week.</p>	<p><b>22</b></p>  <p>Spend a family evening eating cookies and drinking hot chocolate while you read the Christmas cards you have received. Before bed, pray an Our Father and a Hail Mary for all your beloved family and friends.</p>	<p><b>23</b></p> <p>"God, in the Christmas mystery, reveals himself not as one who remains on high and dominates the universe, but as the one who bends down, descends to the little and poor earth, it means that, to be like him, we should not put ourselves above others, but indeed lower ourselves, place ourselves at the service of others, become small with the small and poor with the poor." Pope Francis, Audience, Dec. 18, 2022</p>								
<p><b>24</b></p> <p>On this fourth Sunday of Advent, light the third violet candle on your Advent wreath. Read the Christmas story (Luke 2:1-4) together as a family and reflect on the gift of Christ's life.</p>	<p><b>25</b></p> <p><b>"We cannot have the word Christmas without Christ: so neither can we be Merry on the inside without him."</b> -Venerable Archbishop Fulton Sheen</p>	<p><b>The 'G' Antiphons of Advent</b></p> <p>The Roman Church has been singing the "O" Antiphons since at least the eighth century. They are the antiphons that accompany the Magnificat canticle of Evening Prayer from December 17-23. They are a magnificent theology that uses ancient biblical imagery drawn from the messianic hopes of the Old Testament to proclaim the coming Christ as the fulfillment not only of Old Testament hopes, but present ones as well. Their repeated use of the imperative "Come!" embodies the longing of all for the Divine Messiah.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td> <p><b>December 17</b> O Wisdom of our God Most High, guiding creation with power and love: come to teach us the path of knowledge!</p> </td> <td> <p><b>December 19</b> O Root of Jesse's stem, sign of God's love for all his people: come to save us without delay!</p> </td> <td> <p><b>December 21</b> O Radiant Dawn, splendor of eternal light, sun of justice: come and shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death.</p> </td> <td> <p><b>December 23</b> O Emmanuel, our King and Giver of Law: come to save us, Lord our God!</p> </td> </tr> <tr> <td> <p><b>December 18</b> O Leader of the House of Israel, giver of the Law to Moses on Sinai: come to rescue us with your mighty power!</p> </td> <td> <p><b>December 20</b> O Key of David, opening the gates of God's eternal Kingdom: come and free the prisoners of darkness!</p> </td> <td> <p><b>December 22</b> O King of all nations and keystone of the Church: come and save man, whom you formed from the dust!</p> </td> <td> <p>— From <i>Catholic Household Blessings &amp; Prayers</i></p> </td> </tr> </table> <p><small>Portions of this calendar courtesy usccb.org</small></p>					<p><b>December 17</b> O Wisdom of our God Most High, guiding creation with power and love: come to teach us the path of knowledge!</p>	<p><b>December 19</b> O Root of Jesse's stem, sign of God's love for all his people: come to save us without delay!</p>	<p><b>December 21</b> O Radiant Dawn, splendor of eternal light, sun of justice: come and shine on those who dwell in darkness and in the shadow of death.</p>	<p><b>December 23</b> O Emmanuel, our King and Giver of Law: come to save us, Lord our God!</p>	<p><b>December 18</b> O Leader of the House of Israel, giver of the Law to Moses on Sinai: come to rescue us with your mighty power!</p>	<p><b>December 20</b> O Key of David, opening the gates of God's eternal Kingdom: come and free the prisoners of darkness!</p>	<p><b>December 22</b> O King of all nations and keystone of the Church: come and save man, whom you formed from the dust!</p>	<p>— From <i>Catholic Household Blessings &amp; Prayers</i></p>
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