

Second Sunday of Advent

December 10, 2023

In our commercial culture the time before Christmas is celebrated as if it were already Christmas Day, and/or is seen merely as shopping season in preparation for the exchange of presents on Christmas. In the midst of this cultural attitude towards this season of preparation, it is easy to fall into the trap of seeing Advent as merely a warning track which tells us to get ready for presents, family, and good food. The Collect of the Second Sunday prays that these other things may never hinder us from hastening to meet Our Lord by preparing ourselves for his coming.

Almighty and merciful God,
may no earthly undertaking hinder those
who set out in haste to meet your Son,
but may our learning of heavenly wisdom
gain us admittance to his company.
Who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the
Holy Spirit,
one God, for ever and ever.

Like the previous week's collect, the focus is less upon the upcoming feast of the Nativity and more concerned with the Parousia. As we continue our time of preparation we are reminded that "earthly undertakings" can often cause us to lose sight of true meaning of our lives. Our lives must be directed towards seeking the beatific vision, and when we allow other things to block our sight of this goal, we lose the reference by which we give meaning to our existence. It is important to note that our, "earthly undertakings are not cast in a negative light except in their ability to hinder us for our single-minded pursuit of Christ and his company." The prayer then does not imply that the Church sees these earthly undertakings as evil in themselves but rather that they can become so if we allow them to blind us to our true vocation.

Commenting on the culture of our time Cardinal Ratzinger writes, "Advent is a time when we can say that a kindness that is otherwise almost entirely forgotten is mobilized; namely the willingness to think of others and to give them a token of kindness." This last vestigial kindness is a sign pointing towards the reality that Advent is meant to be a time in which we are moved from out lethargy, awakened, and quickened to live with renewed vigor for the Lord's return. We must be willing "to shake off the dream that causes us to

bypass our true vocation and our best possibilities." This is the grace for which we are praying: to never allow our other desires to assume prominence over our desire to be with Christ. Thus we pray also for heavenly wisdom which judges not as man does, but as God does. Through it we are strengthened to order our desires for good things so that all of them aide us in the one preeminent and essential desire for Christ. With our eyes are opened by this wisdom, we will even be able to give up joyfully good things for the sake of pursuing better things. Such a renunciation is essential for us if we want to be prepared to meet the Lord when He comes. We must be ready with our lamps and oil when the bridegroom comes and it is through renunciation of some other things that we are free enough from the busyness of the world to be prepared daily for Christ's coming.

In the midst of our busyness do we take time to reflect upon the last things, and to recognize that the King of Kings, the Babe of Bethlehem, will come again in glory and majesty "to judge the living and the dead?" Do we allow this knowledge to affect how we live our lives each day? What is holds us back from giving all? These are the questions that we must ask ourselves as we pray this Collect.

5 Irénée Henri Dalmais, Pierre Jounel and Aimé Georges Martimort, *The Liturgy and Time*, trans. Matthew J. O'Connell, Vol. IV (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1986). 93

6 Romans 12:2

7 Patrick Regan, *Advent to Pentecost : Comparing the Seasons in the Ordinary and Extraordinary Forms of the Roman Rite* (Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 2012). 31

8 "Commentary on the Proper Prayers of Advent from the Roman Missal," United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Website. accessed December 1, 2015, <http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-year/advent/commentary-on-advent-proper-prayers.cfm>.

9 Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Seek that which is Above: Meditations through the Year* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986), 16.

10 Ibid., 18

Act of Hope

O Lord God,
I hope by your grace for the pardon
of all my sins
and after life here to gain eternal happiness
because you have promised it
who are infinitely powerful, faithful, kind,
and merciful.
In this hope I intend to live and die.
Amen.



Second Sunday of Advent

December 10, 2023



Faith Formation



Dec. 21st at 5:00pm in the Church -
1st Reconciliation for all parents & students
preparing for 1st Communion.

Advent Penance Service

Wednesday, Dec. 20th

10:00 am - 11:30am

and

5:30 pm - until all have been heard



WALK WITH THE
HOLY FAMILY

Las Posadas



Join us as we celebrate our
Annual Las Posadas Procession
Wed. Dec. 20th at 6:30pm

Las Posadas is a remembrance the Holy Pilgrimage of
Joseph and Mary and all are invited to walk with us
around campus.

**Hot chocolate and refreshments will be
served in the O'Reilly Building**



Help our Social Outreach Ministry collect coats
that will be donated to Churches Touches Lives for
Christ (CTLIC) for those in need.

Together, we can make sure everyone stays warm
this winter!

New and Gently used coats of all sizes
will be accepted.

Donation boxes will be located in the Narthex of
the Church.



All are invited to come and help us prepare the
Church for Christmas!

Saturday, Dec. 23rd at 9:00am

We will be decorating the Church with flowers,
wreaths and all the trimmings.

Come for Mass and stay to help.
Many hands make for quick work!

Second Sunday of Advent**December 10, 2023****December 16th and December 17th, 2023****5:30 PM Mass**

Lector: E. Bigon
 EM: Dcn. M. Hoelscher, D. Shepard,
 R. Krumnow
 Greeters: R. Beck, M. Posey
 Altar Servers: M. Collins, H. Guenat-Ramirez

7:30 AM Mass

Lector: R. Colburn
 EM: Dcn. M. Hoelscher, R. Castillo,
 B. McNeill
 Greeters: K. Botz, K. & J. Oujezdsky, L. Lagut
 Altar Servers: L. Barton, T. Lucksinger, A. Pelawatta

9:30 AM Mass

Lector: W. Keller
 EM: Dcn. B. Rodriguez, R. Morales,
 D. Keller
 Greeters: K. Bartz, J. Baucun, T. Leos, S&K Loos
 Altar Servers: A. Sandoval, K Edwards,
 E. & J. Bennett

11:30 AM Mass

Lector: M. Applewhite
 EM: P. Engbrock, A. Payne, D. Ramos
 Greeters: B. Stewart, L. Castillo, M. Dunham,
 R. Chudej
 Altar Servers: A. & S. Upchurch, D. Applewhite

THE WEEK AHEAD

Date	Event	Location	Time
Mon. Dec 11 th	Quilting Angels	O'Reilly Building	10:00 am
	Crafters	Regina Caeli Room	10:00 am
Tuesday - Friday	Adoration	Adoration Chapel	9:00 am - 5:00 pm
Tues. Dec 12 th	Knitting & Crocheting	O'Reilly Building	10:00 am
	Adult Bible Study	Regina Caeli Room	1:30 pm — 3:30 pm
	Boy Scouts	O'Reilly Building	6:00 pm
	Men of Joseph	Ave Maria Room	7:00 pm
Wed. Dec 13 th	Religious Education	O'Reilly Building	6:30 pm
Thurs. Dec 14 th	RCIA	O'Reilly Building	6:00 pm
Sun. Dec 17 th	Altar Society Christmas Party	O'Reilly Building	1:00 pm
	Divine Mercy Ministry	O'Reilly Building	3:00 pm

**CHALICE FOR VOCATIONS**

Open to all parishioners.
To sign-up, call Debra Hollingsworth
at (713) 586-9800.

Thank you for participating in this prayer initiative and may God richly bless you with every good gift as you pray for priestly vocations!

Dec 17th	Kevin & Rachel Oujezdsky	7:30am
Dec 24th	Debra Hollingsworth	9:30am
Dec 31st	Bruce & Stephanie McAtee	9:30am
Jan 7th	Brian & Patricia St. Amour	11:30am
Jan 13th	Debra King	5:30pm
Jan 21st	Vicki & Nestor Centeno	9:30am
Jan 28th	Rex & Gladys Hengst	9:30am



It's that time of year again ...

Christmas Flowers

If you would like to purchase a poinsettia for a loved one (deceased or living) to help make St. Mary's Church look beautiful for the Christmas season, please pick up a flower donation envelope in the church entry. Write the donor's name and that of your loved one on the envelope.

Cost per flower \$15.00.
All Flower Orders due by Mon, Dec. 18th.

Second Sunday of Advent

December 10, 2023

Parish Giving

December 3, 2023

Sunday Collection	\$	11,310.60
Parish School	\$	1,137.00
Building Fund	\$	52.00
World Home Mission	\$	11.00
Helping Hands	\$	18.00
Total	\$	12,528.60

Note: totals include online giving

* Weekly Operating Expenses: \$11,500.00

**December 11th - December 12th 2023**

Monday	NO MASS	
Tuesday	8:15AM	† Nora Cruz
Wednesday	5:30PM	† Suzy Radasevich
Thursday	8:15AM	Christelle Koffi
Friday	5:30PM	Joshua Peterson
Saturday	8:15AM	† Ervin Kettermann
	5:30PM	† Arlene Wilde
		† Gilbert Lefner
		† George Wilkinson
Sunday	7:30AM	† Agnes Nowaski
		† JoAnn Camp
		Charles Mikeska Family
	9:30AM	Holy Souls in Purgatory
		Clergy & Religious
	11:30AM	For the People



Join us for our Annual
New Year's Eve
"Black-eye Pea Party"

Dec. 31, 2023
immediately following
Midnight Mass
in the Regina Caeli
Room

Christmas & New Year Mass Schedule

Christmas Mass Schedule

Sunday, December 24th
4th Sunday of Advent

(Sat.) 5:30PM; 7:30AM & 9:30AM

No 11:30AM Mass

Christmas Eve

Mass for the Vigil of Christmas

4:30PM & 6:30PM

Solemn Christmas Mass

12:00AM (Midnight)

Monday, December 25th

Christmas Day

8:30AM (Morning Prayer)

9:30AM Mass



No Adoration
Dec. 23rd – Jan. 2nd

New Year's Mass Schedule

Sunday, December 31

Feast of the Holy Family

(Sat.) 5:30PM

(Sun.) 7:30AM, 9:30AM & 11:30AM

Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God

12:00AM (Midnight)

Black-eyed Pea Party 1:00AM

immediately following Mass

in the Regina Caeli Room

January 1st

Mass at 9:30AM