

# ADVENT



*Prepare the way  
of  
The Lord!*

# What is Advent?

- A New Liturgical Year begins with the season of Advent.
- Advent begins four Sundays before Christmas and ends on Christmas Eve. It is a season of prayer and reflection in anticipation of Christmas.
- It began as a season mainly focused on repentance but has evolved into a time of joyful preparation.

## Advent Environment

- Church decorations are simple to provide an atmosphere for prayerful preparation.
- The priest wears violet or purple vestments, the darkness of which reminds us of the darkness of winter, which will soon give way to increasing light.
- On the third Sunday of Advent\*, the priest can wear rose-colored vestments (not pink!), a joyful color that is the color of the morning sky just before dawn, reminding us that we will soon be celebrating the birth of Christ, the Light of the world.

\*Gaudete Sunday ("Rejoice")

## Advent Wreath

- The evergreen wreath symbolizes eternal life, and its circular shape reminds us that God has no beginning and no end.
- Each of the four candles on the Advent wreath represents a particular gift that Jesus brought into the world at his birth: Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. As we light a candle each week, we celebrate these gifts.

## Feasts of Advent

- December 6th: The Feast of St. Nicholas. St. Nicholas was a bishop in what is now known as Turkey, and is a most beloved saint all over the world still today. His generosity and love are celebrated on this day and at Christmas through the sharing of gifts.
- December 8th: The Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, the Feast of the Patroness of the United States of America. On this day, we celebrate the conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary, preserved by God from the stain of original sin.
- December 12th: Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas

## Suggested Practices During Advent

- Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
- Create a family Jesse tree.
- Use an Advent calendar that focuses on daily preparation for Christmas.
- Pray the "O Antiphons" of Advent from December 17-23.



*O, Come Let Us  
Adore Him!*

**The Christmas Season -  
Emmanuel, God with us!**

Christmas is not just one day, but a whole season. It begins on the vigil of December 25th and ends on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

In this dark and cold time of the year, we long for light and warmth. Who can give us what we long for but Christ, the Light of the world?

With great joy, we celebrate this second most sacred time in the Church year, next to Easter\*.

## Christmas Environment

- Church decorations provide an atmosphere of joy, festivity, and light.
- The priest wears white or gold vestments, representing light, purity, and glory.

# Symbols of Christmas

- **christmas tree:** the evergreen is a symbol of eternal life
- **lights:** remind us that Jesus is the light of the world
- **creche (Nativity set):** depicts the real Christmas scene and helps us to remember that Christ came for us personally
- **colors:** red for the blood Jesus shed for us, and green to represent the life he offers us
- **angels:** remind us of the angels that announced Jesus' birth to the shepherds
- **star:** represents the star the Magi followed to find baby Jesus
- **bells:** to announce the great event of Jesus' birth
- **ball ornaments:** round to symbolize that God has no beginning or end
- **holly:** prickly leaves represent Jesus' crown of thorns, and berries represent the drops of blood he shed from wearing the thorns

# Feasts of Christmas

- The Octave of Christmas
  - The eight days of celebration begin on the vigil of December 25th: **Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord**, and end on January 1st: **Solemnity of Mary, the Holy Mother of God**.
  - Other feasts that fall within this Octave:
    - Feast of St. Stephen, first Christian Martyr (12/26)
    - Feast of St. John the Apostle (12/27)
    - Feast of the Holy Innocents, in remembrance of those killed in King Herod's effort to destroy baby Jesus (12/28)
    - Feast of the Holy Family, Sunday after Christmas Day (or 12/30)
- **Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord:** Traditionally observed on January 6th, this feast celebrates the visit of the Magi to the Christ child as a moment in which Christ made himself known to the world.
- **Feast of the Baptism of the Lord:** Traditionally observed on January 13th, this feast celebrates the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist in the Jordan River.

*\*Christmas has sometimes been referred to as the "winter pasch".*

**Saint Clement Parish, Lakewood, Ohio**

Visit the St. Clement website to access the events calendar,  
Sunday bulletins and current event announcements.

[www.stclementlakewood.com](http://www.stclementlakewood.com)