



# Family Faith Formation News

## Family Devotionals and Sacrament Schedule

### Eucharistic Adoration

St. Anne's Chapel at  
St. Louis Bertrand, Foreston  
Monday at 8:00 a.m. until  
Saturday at 7:00 a.m.

St. Mary's, Milaca following  
Daily Mass each Thursday until  
5:00 p.m. Except the Thursday  
before First Friday, then  
Adoration closes after  
Reconciliation at 5:45 p.m.

**\*\*Please note Adoration Closes  
at St. Anne's Chapel at 3:00 p.m.  
on Christmas Eve.**

### Reconciliation

#### Saturdays

Confession at 3:00 p.m. in  
Foreston and after 6:00 p.m.  
Mass in Ogilvie.

#### Sundays

Confession upon request before  
Mass in Milaca and Mora.

#### Second Friday of Each Month

Confession at St. Mary's, Mora  
from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m.

#### Thursday before First Friday

Confession at St. Mary's, Milaca  
from 4:45 to 5:45 p.m.

### Family Rosary

Sundays at St. Mary's, Milaca at  
6:00 p.m. (December 12 will be in  
honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe.)

### First Friday

Mass at St. Mary's, Mora each  
First Friday at 7:00 a.m.

### First Saturday

Prayers and devotions on the  
first Saturday of each month held  
at St. Mary's, Milaca at 9:00 a.m.

*O Come Let Us  
Adore Him,  
Our Eucharistic Savior!*



## December: A Time of Preparation and Celebration

The Church has established a way for the faithful to remember, celebrate, and live today the events of Christ's life on earth. She offers a way to sanctify (make holy) every moment of every day through the celebration of the Mass and the praying of the Liturgy of the Hours. By developing a special calendar, the Church gives us periodic reminders to keep our faith alive and inspire us to grow deeper in our love for Christ with the passing years.

The season of Advent stands at the very beginning of the liturgical year. It is about four weeks long and its purpose is to prepare the Church for the Lord's Second Coming. Advent is a time of genuine conversion and reform of life. The purple vestments worn by the priest during Advent recall the importance of penance and change of heart. Acts of penance and fasting are encouraged during this season. The remaining days of December mark the beginning of the Christmas season. The liturgical color changes to white or gold — a symbol of joy, purity and innocence.

Advent comes from the Latin word meaning "coming." Jesus is coming, and Advent is intended to be a season of preparation for His arrival. While we typically regard Advent as a joyous season, it is also intended to be a period of preparation, much like Lent. Prayer, penance and fasting are appropriate during this season.

The month of December is filled with expectation and celebration. Preparation is the key word for the first 24 days of December. Everyone is getting ready for Christmas — shopping and decorating, baking and cleaning. Too often, however, we are so busy with the material preparations that we lose sight of the real reason for our activity.

Christmas is a Christian feast — and we must reclaim it as such! In the same way that a family eagerly prepares for a baby, so in Advent should we prepare for the coming of the Christ Child. We should keep Advent as a season of waiting and longing, of conversion and of hope and keep our thoughts on the incredible love and humility of our God in taking

on the flesh of the Virgin Mary. Let us not forget to prepare a peaceful place in our hearts wherein our Savior may come to dwell. (catholicculture)

### **St. Nicholas - December 6**

The patron saint of children. Saint Nicholas, a bishop who lived during the third century, is the original "Santa Claus." On the feast of St. Nicholas, children leave their shoes by the door for St. Nicholas to fill with candy (often foil-wrapped chocolate coins). This tradition recalls the story of how St. Nicholas secretly provided the dowry for young maidens so they could get married. This feast day is also a good opportunity to tell kids the true story of "Santa Claus." <https://www.stnicholascenter.org/>

### **Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe December 12**

December 8 and 12 are patronal feasts for Americans, with the Immaculate Conception as the patroness for the United States of America (December 8), and Our Lady of Guadalupe (December 12) as the patroness of the Americas.

Our Lady of Guadalupe December 12: appeared to Juan Diego, an Aztec convert in December 1531, and miraculously imprinted her image on his cloak which is enshrined within the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City.

\*Note: When December 12 falls on a Sunday the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe is not usually liturgically celebrated that year.

### **Feast of the Holy Family December 26**

The Feast of the Holy Family is not just about the Holy Family, but about our own families too. The main purpose of the Feast is to present the Holy Family as the model for all Christian families, and for domestic life in general. Our family life becomes sanctified when we live the life of the Church within our homes.

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# This Month's Q&A

## Q: Was Mary Married to Joseph?

A: Various translations of Luke 1:27 state that Mary was betrothed or espoused to Joseph. It is important that we do not “read between the lines,” making the faulty assumption that being betrothed to Joseph precluded Mary’s being married to him. Nowhere should a translation of Sacred Scripture indicate that Mary was not married to Joseph at the time of the Annunciation and Incarnation. It is, in fact, erroneous to make such a claim. Translations in which Mary declares, “I have no husband” (Luke 1:34, RSVCE) instead of the more correct, “I know not man” (Douay-Rheims), stand in opposition to the perennial teaching of the Catholic Church, for although their marriage had not been consummated, a marriage had been contracted between Joseph and Mary. “Betrothal,” according to the ancient Hebrew practice, is marriage, not a mere engagement to be married. For more information, read an address given by Cardinal Raymond Burke addressing the “rather widespread confusion and error” regarding the marriage of Saint Joseph and the Blessed Virgin Mary. Or contact the Faith Formation office for the handout. <https://mariancatechist.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/ESSAYMarriageJosephMary.pdf>

## December 8: Feast of the Immaculate Conception Patroness of the US

In His plan for the salvation of humanity, God desired the cooperation of a creature. From all eternity, he had chosen Mary of Nazareth to be the mother of His Son. In order to be a pure and unstained vessel, from the first moment of her conception, Mary was preserved from all sin. This is known as the Immaculate Conception. Immaculate simply means without sin.

Mary’s preservation from sin was necessary because, as the Mother of God, she would give Jesus, the Son of God, a human nature identical to her own. Jesus could not be united to a fallen nature so God preserved His mother from sin. He gave her an immaculate human nature, which she would give to the eternal Son when He became incarnate.

Mary’s Immaculate Conception did not mean that she had no need of redemption. On the contrary, she could be preserved from sin from the first moment of her conception only by the redemption of Christ on the cross. God applied the graces won by Christ to redeem Mary at the moment of her conception. Chronologically, Mary’s conception happened before salvation had come into the world. But God could redeem Mary in this way because He is outside of time. Mary was created and redeemed in the same moment.

Each country adopts a special intercessor as their patron saint. It took the bishops of the newly created United States of America 70 years to appoint the Blessed Virgin Mary as patroness of their country. In doing so, they invoked Mary under her title of Our Lady of the Immaculate Conception. The decision was reached on May 13, 1846. Not long after the United States made this decision, Pope Pius IX promulgated on December 8, 1854 that “the most Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instance of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege granted by Almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the human race, was preserved free from all stain of original sin.” This was a confirmation of a long-held belief in the Catholic Church that is based on various passages in the Bible. (Excerpts from Aletheia.org)

## Saint Feast Days in December

6	St. Nicholas
8	Immaculate Conception, Holy Day
9	St. Juan Diego
12	Our Lady of Guadalupe
14	St. John of the Cross
25	Nativity of Our Lord, Holy Day
26	The Holy Family
28	The Holy Innocents
29	St. Thomas Becket

**December 1 - 6:15pm – 7:45pm**

**Class at St. Mary's for all Students, Parents & Parishioners:**

Speaker Father Brady Keller presents:

“Jesus’ presence in the Church He founded.”

## December Software Pick

### Amen: Catholic Meditation App

This free app from Augustine Institute (FORMED) delivers daily Catholic prayers and meditations – at your fingertips. Find it in your app store.

## Catholic Traditions for Advent and Christmas

<https://www.catholiceducation.org/en/culture/catholic-contributions/catholic-traditions-for-advent-and-christmas.html>

**Advent traditions are a great way to prepare and to help your family receive much grace and blessing.**

### 1. Sacrifices for the Baby Jesus

During Advent we spiritually prepare for the coming of Christ. Each time that we deny ourselves, or do something kind for another person, it has the effect of allowing Christ to shine through us. For children, this is visually represented by the activity of making small sacrifices for the Baby Jesus. The idea behind this Advent activity is that for each kindness done by a child, a small piece of straw is placed in Baby Jesus' manger. Day by day, these pieces of straw accumulate. Then, on Christmas Eve, the Baby Jesus is placed in the manger now filled with straw which offers him a comfortable place to lay his head. This is a tangible symbol of how we make room

for Christ in our souls by our daily sacrifices, and children learn the spirit of sacrifice as a preparation for the coming of Jesus Christ.

**2. Advent Calendar** - The Advent calendar counts down the 24 days of December ending on Christmas Eve. Advent calendars are a great way to engage children in the entire Christmas season.

**3. Advent Wreath** - Advent wreaths usually consist of four candles, three violet and one rose, set in a circular wreath (usually made of evergreen branches). One candle is lit for each Sunday of Advent, with the rose candle being lit on the third Sunday (Gaudete Sunday, from the Latin word for “rejoice”). The violet (or purple) candles represent the penance and sacrifice we undertake to help us prepare for the Lord’s coming at Christmas; the rose candle represents the rejoicing of the faithful at the mid-point of Advent.



## The Incarnation

*“And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth: we have beheld His glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father.”* John 1:14

The Father, in keeping with His promise to send a redeemer for all humankind, acted beyond all expectation. He sent His own divine and beloved Son. This coming to earth of the very Son of God, through the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary is the incarnation (that is the “enfleshment”): the coming together of God and humanity in the person of Jesus.

The Son of God truly became man – a historical person born of the Virgin of Nazareth in the little town of Bethlehem during the reign of King Herod while Caesar Augustus ruled all of the Roman world. He lived in Nazareth, learned to be a carpenter like His earthly father, Joseph, and was even lost for a few days during a trip to Jerusalem when a young boy. He is fully human in all things, except sin.

The heart of the Catholic Faith is not an idea but a Person, who is true God and true Man: Jesus Christ, Son of God and Son of Mary.

*“Thanks be unto God for His indescribable gift!”*  
(2 Corinthians 9:15)