

The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord—January 10th

Collect Prayer from the Mass of the Day:

Almighty ever-living God, who, when Christ had been baptized in the River Jordan and as the Holy Spirit descended upon him, solemnly declared him your beloved Son, grant that your children by adoption, reborn of water and the Holy Spirit, may always be well pleasing to you. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.

Activity:

Take out your own baptismal candles and replace the Christmas candles in your advent wreath with them! You could also put up a holy water font next to your front door if you don't have one already. As a family, renew your baptismal promises during prayer time.



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Seasons of Light



Advent & Christmas Liturgical Living Booklet



Advent Greetings

Dear Friends in Christ,

As we begin the liturgical year this Advent it is our prayer that we can all begin anew with prayer and festivity. This last year has been one that we could have never anticipated, but we are thankful to God to have been able to serve you.

The clergy and staff of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church hopes to see all of you at the Celebration of Holy Mass this Advent and Christmas season. We look forward to celebrating all the Sundays in Advent and the beautiful feast days of the season.

We gather at Mass to open our hearts to receive Jesus in the Holy Eucharist and to worship our Lord together as a community of faith.

You and your families are always in our prayers and we want to help you make this an enriching season. Please use this booklet as a resource for bringing your family and friends together to pray with your Advent wreath, bless your nativity sets, and celebrate feast days with food and activities.

We praise and thank God for His many blessings, one of which includes this wonderful community. Remember, Christ is coming! Let us prepare a place in our hearts and homes!

Peace & Good,
The Clergy and Staff of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church

"Advent is here. What a marvelous time in which to renew your desire, your nostalgia, your real longing for Christ to come - for him to come every day to your soul in the Eucharist. The Church encourages us: ecce veniet! He is about to arrive!" -St. Josemaria Escriva

Rite of Chalking the Door of the Home

The "Leader" should be the father (or the head) of the household, as he technically is the spiritual head of the whole family, something the spiritual realm takes seriously.

Leader: Peace be to this house, and to all who enter here.

All: Amen.

Leader: God of heaven and earth, Loving God, You revealed Your Only-begotten Son to every nation by the guidance of a star. Bless this house and all who inhabit it. May we be blessed with health, goodness of heart, gentleness, and abiding in Your will. Fill us with the light of Christ, that our concern for others may reflect Your Love. May all who come to our home this year rejoice to find Christ living among us; and may we seek and serve, in everyone we meet, that same Jesus Who is Your Incarnate Word, now and forever. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Family members: take turns making the inscription (20+C+M+B+21) with blessed chalk as leader says...

Leader: The three Wise Men, [C] Caspar, [M] Melchior, and [B] Balthasar followed the star to Bethlehem and the child Jesus [20] two thousand, [21] and twenty-one years ago. [+ +] May Christ bless our home [+ +], and remain with us throughout the new year. Amen.

All say the Lord's Prayer: Our Father...

All: End with the Sign of the Cross and bless yourself with Holy Water, if you have it.



Solemnity of the Epiphany of the Lord—January 3rd

Chalking the Door—Ancient Roots

Epiphany Chalking of the Doors is an ancient tradition that not only places God at the entrance of your home, it places your entire family under His protection.

This tradition has biblical roots, deeply tied to the Passover in the book of Exodus. The Lord said to Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt ... “take some of the blood [of the lamb], and put it on the two doorposts and the lintel of the houses in which they eat them. ... when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and no plague shall fall upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt.” (cf. Exodus 12:1-13)

It is no coincidence that the Epiphany inscription is traditionally written on the lintel (top of door frame) of the main doorway and even some of the prayers echo God’s words of protection that he gave to Moses.

Description of the Inscription

“20 + C + M + B + 21”

Meaning: “20” being the millennium and century, the letters standing for the first Wise Men, “C” for Caspar, “M” for Melchior, “B” for Balthasar, and the “21” standing for the decade and year. The initials C, M, B also stand for “Christus mansionem benedicat” (“Christ bless this house”).

Important Note: *This is not a house blessing like you would invite a priest to do. In the prayers on the next page, you are asking God to bless your house. This is different from the blessing a priest does, who by virtue of his ordination has been given the authority to make your house blessed. Please contact the parish if you want your house formally blessed!*

Advent Wreath Prayers

Blessing of Advent Wreath—First Sunday of Advent

Leader: Lord our God, we praise you for your Son, Jesus Christ: he is Emmanuel, the hope of the peoples, he is the wisdom that teaches and guides us, he is the Savior of every nation. Lord God, let your blessing come upon us as we light the candles of this wreath. May the wreath and its light be a sign of Christ’s promise to bring us salvation. May he come quickly and not delay. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **All:** Amen.

Prayer for the First Sunday

Leader: O Lord, stir up Thy might, we beg Thee, and come, That by Thy protection we may deserve to be rescued from the threatening dangers of our sins and saved by Thy deliverance. Through Christ our Lord. **All:** Amen.

Prayer for the Second Sunday

Leader: 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 minds. Through Christ our Lord. **All:** Amen.

Prayer for the Third Sunday (Rejoice Sunday)

Leader: O Lord, we beg Thee, incline Thy ear to our prayers and enlighten the darkness of our minds by the grace of Thy visitation. Through Christ our Lord. **All:** Amen.

Prayer for the Fourth Sunday

Leader: O Lord, stir up Thy power, we pray Thee, and come; and with great might help us, that with the help of Thy Grace, Thy merciful forgiveness may hasten what our sins impede. Through Christ our Lord. **All:** Amen.

Feast of St. Nicholas—December 6th

The Story: St. Nicholas, the Bishop of Myra, was known for his many acts of goodwill and charity towards the poor, especially poor children. It is said that when he would toss little pouches of coins through the windows of the poor that sometimes they would land in stockings that were hung on the windowsill to dry.

Activity: Many cultures still do this on the Eve of his feast day and many American Catholic families have chosen to do the same. Ideas to include in your children's shoes are bags of chocolate candy coins, a small toy, inexpensive religious items: a Christmas ornament, a rosary, saint bracelet, or prayer cards. You can also include candy canes which symbolize a shepherd's staff and St. Nicholas' crosier.

Blessing for the Candy Cane:

Good St. Nicholas, we honor you on this your holy feast day. We rejoice that you are the patron saint and the holy symbol of joy for many peoples of many lands. Come, great-hearted saint, and be our patron and companion as we, once again, prepare our homes and hearts for the great feast of Christmas, the birth of the Eternal Blessing, Jesus Christ. May these sweets, these candy canes, be a sign of Advent joy for us. May these candy canes, shaped just like your Bishop's staff, be for us a sign of your benevolent care. We rejoice that you are the holy bringer of gifts and that so many have been delighted through your great generosity. Help us to be as generous of heart. Wherever these candy canes are hung, on tree or wall or door, may they carry with them the bright blessing of God. May all who shall taste them experience the joy of God upon their tongues and in their hearts. We ask God, now, to bless these your brightly striped Sweets in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen



Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God—January 1st



Prayer—The Angelus:

V- The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.

R- And she conceived by the Holy Spirit.

(Hail Mary....)

V- Behold the handmaid of the Lord.

R- Be it done unto me according to thy word.

(Hail Mary....)

V- And the Word was made Flesh.

R- And dwelt among us.

(Hail Mary....)

V- Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.

R- That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

LET US PRAY:

Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts; that, we to whom the Incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an Angel, may by His Passion and Cross, be brought to the glory of His Resurrection through the same Christ our Lord. Amen.

Activity:

Begin a tradition of making pancakes filled with blueberries to remind us of Our Lady's blue mantel under which she guards and cares for us, her children!

Feast of the Holy Family— December 27



Prayer:

Jesus, Mary and Joseph, in you we contemplate the splendor of true love, to you we turn with trust. Holy Family of Nazareth, grant that our families too may be places of communion and prayer, authentic schools of the Gospel, and small domestic Churches. Holy Family of Nazareth, may families never again experience violence, rejection and division: may all who have been hurt or scandalized find ready comfort and healing. Holy Family of Nazareth, may the approaching Synod of Bishops, make us once more mindful of the sacredness and inviolability of the family, and its beauty in God's plan. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, graciously hear our prayer.
Amen.

Activity:

Plan a family dinner and have all members get involved in making something. You could also have each person pick their favorite side to contribute. Afterwards, have a game night or watch a movie together, but don't forget to spend some time in prayer.

Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception—December 8th



Prayer:

Most holy Virgin, who was pleasing to the Lord and became His Mother, immaculate in body and spirit, in faith and in love, look kindly on the wretched who implore thy powerful patronage. The wicked serpent, against whom was hurled the first curse, continues fiercely to attack and ensnare the unhappy children of Eve. Do thou, then, O Blessed Mother, our queen and advocate, who from the first instant of thy conception didst crush the head of the enemy, receive the prayers which, united with thee in our single heart, we implore thee to present at the throne of God, that we may never fall into the snares which are laid out for us, and may all arrive at the port of salvation; and, in so many dangers, may the Church and Christian society sing once again the hymn of deliverance and of victory and of peace. Amen.

Activity:

Make a Marian decorated candle to light at dinner tonight.

Celebrate with Food:

Prepare an all-white dinner such as pasta with alfredo sauce, mashed potatoes, white corn, white bread, or a clam chowder soup.



Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of All the Americas— December 12th

Prayer:

Dear mother, we love you. We thank you for your promise to help us in our need. We trust in your love that dries our tears and comforts us. Teach us to find our peace in your son, Jesus, and bless us every day of our lives. Help us to build a shrine in our hearts. Make it as beautiful as the one built for you on the mount of Tepeyac. A shrine full of trust, hope, and love of Jesus growing stronger each day. Mary, you have chosen to remain with us by giving us your most wonderful and holy self-image on Juan Diego's cloak. May we feel your loving presence as we look upon your face. Like Juan, give us the courage to bring your message of hope to everyone. You are our mother and our inspiration. Hear our prayers and answer us.

Amen

Activity:

Go outside and star gaze together, identify constellations in honor of the constellation on Our Lady of Guadalupe's tilma.



Prayer Before Nativity Scene in the Home

When the manger is set up in the home, it is appropriate that it be blessed by the head of the household.

All make the sign of the cross as the leader says:

Leader: Our help is in the name of the Lord.

All: Who made heaven and earth.

One of those present or the leader reads a text of sacred Scripture, for example, Luke 2:1 (lines 1-8) or Isaiah 7:10 (lines 10-15, the birth of Emmanuel).

After the reading, the leader prays with hands joined:

Leader: God of every nation and people, from the very beginning of creation you have made manifest your love: when our need for a Savior was great you sent your Son to be born of the Virgin Mary. To our lives he brings joy and peace, justice, mercy, and love.

Lord, bless all who look upon this manger; may it remind us of the humble birth of Jesus, and raise our thoughts to him, who is God-with-us and Savior of all, and who lives and reigns forever and ever.

All: Amen.

Text of blessing from Catholic Household Blessings & Prayers