



family MATTERS

THE MONTH OF *December*



Advent First

Christmas Second

Preparing for Advent is essential because it reminds us of the ultimate purpose of Christmas. It helps us prepare our hearts for the birth of Jesus Christ, so that we are spiritually ready to celebrate, not just ready because we've wrapped all the gifts, baked the cookies and hung the lights. Advent is truly about getting ready to encounter Jesus at Christmas.

ARE YOU READY?

**HOW CAN YOUR FAMILY BETTER PREPARE TO LIVE THE SPIRIT OF ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS IN YOUR HOMES THIS YEAR?
HERE ARE A FEW SUGGESTIONS:**

Set up a Nativity Scene in your home, (imagine the journey of Mary and Joseph and what it was like to be with them as the baby Jesus comes into the world?). Make an advent wreath. Bless your Christmas Tree and its ornaments. Celebrate St. Nicholas Day. Read Christmas stories and watch Christmas movies together as a family, discuss how the themes from these popular tales mirror Jesus' birth-the true meaning of Christmas.

Go to daily Mass. Participate in Liturgy of the Hours.

A prayerful journey with the Holy Family and the Church throughout Advent will lead to gifts of gratitude and joy when we enter the Christmas Season.

Celebrate!

December

- DEC. 3 - ST. FRANCIS XAVIER
- DEC. 6 - ST. NICHOLAS DAY
- DEC. 7 - ST. AMBROSE
- DEC. 8 - IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
- DEC. 9 - ST. JUAN DIEGO
- DEC. 12 - OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE
- DEC. 13 - ST. LUCY
- DEC. 14 - ST. JOHN OF THE CROSS
- DEC. 16 - POSADA
- DEC. 17 - O ANTIPHONS BEGIN
- DEC. 25 - JESUS' BIRTHDAY
- DEC. 30 - HOLY FAMILY OF JESUS, MARY AND JOSEPH

Feast of the Holy Family - December 30

The feast of the Holy Family is dedicated to the Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph, commemorating their life together in Nazareth, a model for all families, and calling us to focus on our own Catholic family life.



PRAYER TO THE HOLY FAMILY

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, 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

Pope Francis, Amoris Laetitia

Have yourself a merry little

Christmas

but don't let this



season pass you by.