

PARISH CALENDAR

First Sunday
of Advent

December 3, 2023

I lift up my soul, to you,
O my God!

MARY



Blessed
are you
among
women

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Saturday, December 2 5:00 p.m.	Mass, Aloha Sunday
Sunday, December 3 7:00 a.m.	Mass, Aloha Sunday
	..... 9:00 a.m.	Mass (Live Stream), Aloha Sunday
	..... 5:00 p.m.	Mass, Aloha Sunday
Monday, December 4	..... 7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Communion Service
	..... 9:30-11:00 a.m.	Food Pantry Open
	..... 7:00 p.m.	Advent Reconciliation Service
Tuesday, December 5	..... 7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Mass
Wednesday, December 6	..... 7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Mass
	..... 9:30-11:00 a.m.	Food Pantry Open
Thursday, December 7	..... 7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Mass
Friday, December 8	..... 7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Mass - Immaculate Conception
	..... 7:00 p.m.	Mass - Immaculate Conception
Saturday, December 9	..... 7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of Hours/Rosary
	..... 8:00 a.m.	Mass
	..... 4:00-4:30 p.m.	Confession - Church
	..... 5:00 p.m.	Mass

NEXT SUNDAY READINGS:

Is:40:1-5, 9-11 : Speaking for God, Isaiah said, "Comfort, give comfort to my people," says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem.

2 Pt:3:8-14: Peter wrote that god does not want anyone to perish but wants all to repent, for the day of the Lord comes like a thief in the night.

Mk:1:1-8: Jesus said, "Be watchful! Be alert! You do not know when the time will come. . .

GOSPEL REFLECTION

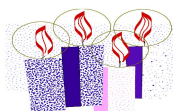
"Jesus said to his disciples: "Be watchful! Be alert! You do not know when the time will come." Mark 13:33

To which time is our Lord referring? He is referring to the time of His coming. But it must be understood that even though He came to us once in the flesh long ago, and though He will return again in the flesh to judge the living and the dead at the end of time, He never ceases to come to us day and night by the transforming gift of grace. Are you attentive to this coming? Or do you miss out on the countless blessings of God's grace that He wants to bestow upon you every day, all day?

The world has many distractions. We are distracted by the lure of riches, the indulgence of our appetites, and the constant noise of modern media, electronic gadgets and the like. These and many other daily distractions make it very difficult to be constantly "watchful" and "alert." This is because our attention span is limited. Though some may learn to "multi-task" to a certain extent, no one can continually divide their attention between the presence of God and the distractions of the world. Some may argue that it is necessary to engage the world today. It is not possible to continually pray and think only about God. But those who would be tempted to think this do not understand the attentiveness and watchfulness to which we are called. Being watchful and attentive simply means that God is central in our lives and is the motivation and purpose of all we do every day. Our love for and service to God cannot be divided. We cannot set aside some time for the world and other times for God. Instead, everything we do, every day, all day, must have the glory of God and the fulfillment of God's perfect will as the central and exclusive purpose of our lives. Thus, if we interact with the world, tune into social media, fulfill household chores, put in extra hours at work, etc., we must constantly ponder the simple question, "Lord, am I doing this for Your glory and in accord with Your will?" We must never fail to ask ourselves that question. We must always have the glory of God and the fulfillment of His will as the central purpose and motivation for all that we do. If we can live this way, then we will discover that it becomes increasingly easy to always and everywhere be attentive to and watchful for God's will.

Reflect, today, upon that to which you most often turn your attention. What is it that you think about the most each day? To what are you most attentive and watchful? If the answer to that question is not the ongoing prompting of God and His grace, then make note of that fact. Humbly pray that you can change and begin to form a transforming habit of daily keeping your attention on our Lord so that He will become your daily guide and focus in all things.

Lord of all grace, You come to me day and night, speaking to me, calling me and desiring to guide me. May I learn to turn my full attention to You every day so that nothing but You and Your holy will lead me always. Jesus, I trust in You. (Catholic Life)



The Season of Advent
lights our way to the Lord

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS: You can help.

"Religious are blessed to serve," says Dominican Father Bertrand Ebben, age 90. Please donate to the Retirement Fund for Religious next week. Your gift will provide essential care for nearly 25,000 senior sisters, brothers and religious order priests who have dedicated their lives to serving others. Let us show our gratitude to these selfless individuals by giving generously. Envelopes are at the back of church and in your envelope packet.

ADVENT PENANCE SERVICES: Listed is the Leeward Vicariate Advent Penance Service: **Tue 12/5 - St. Joseph, Waipahu (6:30 p. m.)** **Thur 12/7 - Sacred Heart, Waianae / Mon 12/11 - St. Jude, Kapolei / Tue 12/12 - OLPH, Ewa Beach. - Wed 12/13 Immaculate Conception - Ewa. All services begins at 7:00 p.m., except St. Joseph.**

WORD OF LIFE: "The Gospel of Life recognizes the full range of threats against human life, from poverty and malnutrition to murder and war. Particular emphasis, however, is placed on threats to life at its beginning and end – precisely when it is most in need of protection. In modern times, children in their mothers' wombs and those approaching the end of their lives are certainly among the "least of these" in our world's estimation." USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, (www.respectlife.org/live-the-gospel-of-life)

WEEKLY READINGS

Dec 3 Sun: 1st Sunday of Advent

Is:63:16b-17, 19b; 64:2-7; Ps:80; 1 Cor:1:3-9; Mk:13:13-37

Dec 4 Mon: Advent Weekday

Is:2:1-5; Ps:122:1-2, 3-4b, 4cd-5, 6-7, 8-9; Mt:8:5-11

Dec 5 Tue: Advent Weekday

Is:11:1-10; Ps:72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17; Lk:10:21-24

Dec 6 Wed: Advent Weekday

Is:25:6-10a; Ps:23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6; Mt:15:29-37

Dec 7 Thur: Saint Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor of the Church

Is:26:1-6; Ps:118; 1 & 8-9, 19-21, 25-27a; Mt:7:21, 24-27

Dec 8 Fri: Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Gn:3:9-15, 20; Ps:98; Ep:1:3-6, 11-12; Lk:1:26-38

Dec 9 Sat: Advent Weekday

Is:30: 19-21, 23-26; Ps:147:1-2, 3-4, 5-6; Mt:9:35-10:1, 5a, 6-8



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IT MUST BE GOD'S FAULT

It must be God's fault. That's the conclusion Isaiah reaches. And who of us hasn't thought the same? If things don't go our way, if someone hurts us, if someone leaves us—even if the mess is our own fault—we blame God.

People sin, but Isaiah asks God, "Why do you let us wander, O Lord, from your ways?" People show no remorse, but Isaiah asks God, "Why do you harden our hearts so that we fear you not?" Must be God's fault.

Isaiah's prayer opens the season of Advent because of a specific request it makes. "Rend the heavens and come down." In the midst of our misfortune, sorrow, and sin, when we realize our own strength fails to make life any better, to eliminate hurt, or to erase the past, we finally turn to God for a solution. Let there be no veil concealing heaven from earth. Let God rip it open, come down here, and save us from the messiness of life.

God did just that on the first Christmas Day.

As we stand on the threshold of another Advent, we ask God to do it again. Even if our mess isn't God's fault, we need God's help to set us free.

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READY OR NOT

When a new child is born, parents are excited. But they also wonder, "Am I ready for this?" Parenting carries responsibilities. A new child will cause unimaginable changes. There is never enough preparation for parenting. Eventually a parent realizes, "I'm as ready as I'll ever be." God usually provides them with the grace, wisdom, and patience they seek. All the spiritual gifts they want are there. The Christian community at Corinth was like a young family with new children. Having received the gift of faith, this community shared their determination to forge a way of life in union with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It was an exciting time but also a nervous time. They probably wondered, "Am I ready for this?"

They believed that the Second Coming of Christ was imminent. They believed they had to prepare each day to meet Christ whenever he returned. Most important, as they thought about the end, the day of their Lord Jesus Christ, they wondered, "Am I ready for this?"

Paul told them yes. "You are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ."

And neither are we. As we begin this Advent, filled with excitement and nervous about the weeks ahead, it is natural to wonder, "Am I ready?" You are not lacking in any spiritual gift. Open your arms and welcome Christ!

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FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Bless Our Advent Time

Eternal God,
you are the architect of time.
As we prepare for your promised coming,
guide us to turn toward you.
Let us see your face and we shall be saved.
Bless our Advent wreath.
As we light each candle,

may the flame of Christ's coming
grow brighter
and enkindle our eagerness
to welcome him into our hearts, lives,
and world.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Sunday, December 3, 2023

Come, Lord Jesus



Today's readings: Isaiah 63:16b–17, 19b; 64:2–7; Psalm 80:2–3, 15–16, 18–19; 1 Corinthians 1:3–9; Mark 13:33–37. The season of Advent (from the Latin *adventus* meaning “coming”) is a time to prepare for the coming of Christ. We anticipate three advents: the first is the historical coming of the Christ two thousand years ago; the second, the coming of Christ among us now; and the third advent, the hope of Christ coming again at the end of time.

Advent begins four Sundays before Christmas. This year, it lands in early December, shortening our Advent season by an entire week. One of the best-known customs of the season is the Advent wreath. The circle of evergreens

symbolizes the eternal character of God's time and Christ's reach into our time to lead us to the light of everlasting life. The four candles on the wreath—three violet, one rose—mark our progress through the season. The rose candle is for the Third Sunday of Advent, called *Gaudete Sunday* after the first word of the entrance antiphon on that day, meaning “rejoice.” The day symbolizes our joy as we draw closer to the birth of Christ. Bless your Advent wreath with the lighting of the first violet candle, and as a prayerful entrance into Advent invoke today's psalm response: “Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved” (Psalm 80:4).



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, December 4

Say the Word

Today's Gospel relates a miracle performed by Jesus. Within the dialogue, the words of a Roman soldier become what we pray at Mass: "Lord, I am not worthy that you should enter under my roof, but only say the word and my soul shall be healed." The soldier understands that Jesus' words carry divine power. Throughout Advent, we follow the soldier's example of faith by assuming a stance of humility and openness to the work of the Lord. *Today's readings: Isaiah 2:1–5; Psalm 122:1–2, 3–4, 4–5, 6–7, 8–9; Matthew 8:5–11.*

Tuesday, December 5

The Shoot of Jesse

The Jesse tree is an Advent custom that helps us connect the festive practice of decorating Christmas trees to Jesus' biblical ancestors. Its name is derived from today's first reading, "A shoot shall come out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots" (Isaiah 11:1). Jesse, the father of King David, is often looked upon as the first person in the genealogy of Jesus. For your Jesse tree, start with a bare branch and hang a new ornament every day. These ornaments represent the individual figures from the Bible. They can be made from any material you choose. *Today's readings: Isaiah 11:1–10; Psalm 72:1–2, 7–8, 12–13, 17; Luke 10:21–24.*

Wednesday, December 6

St. Nicholas

St. Nicholas was the bishop of Myra (modern-day Turkey) in the fourth century. According to legend, he anonymously provided generous help to those in need. One story says he dropped bags of gold down the chimneys of poor families, widows, and orphans. Surprise family members with a stocking filled with gifts. Plan an anonymous gift for a person or agency in need this Advent. *Today's readings: Isaiah 25:6–10a; Psalm 23:1–3a, 3b–4, 5, 6; Matthew 15:29–37.*

Thursday, December 7

St. Ambrose

St. Ambrose served as the bishop of Milan during the fourth century. A brilliant theologian and doctor of the Church, St. Ambrose helped articulate the Christian faith through his writings. He is also remembered for a beautiful Advent carol, "O Come, Redeemer of the Earth." Create your own playlist of Advent music to keep your heart and mind firmly planted in the spirituality of preparation. *Today's readings: Isaiah 26:1–6; Psalm 118:1, 8–9, 19–21, 25–27a; Matthew 7:21, 24–27.*

Friday, December 8

Immaculate Conception

The Church sets aside today as a holyday of obligation, recognizing that Mary was conceived without original sin so that she could become the vessel to bear God made flesh. Today's Gospel highlights the fullness of grace given to Mary, by which she said yes to God's plan for her life. Advent is a perfect time to pray the joyful mysteries of the Rosary, from the mystery of the annunciation through the incarnation to the rearing of Jesus in faith. *Today's readings: Genesis 3:9–15, 20; Psalm 98:1, 2–3ab, 3cd–4; Ephesians 1:3–6, 11–12; Luke 1:26–38.*

Saturday, December 9

St. Juan Diego

On December 9, 1531, the Virgin Mary asked Juan Diego to tell the bishop that she desired a temple to be built on Tepeyac Hill in Mexico. From this place, she would hear the anguish of all who live in the region and respond with love, compassion, and protection. Hesitant to accept Juan Diego's account of Mary's appearance, the bishop requested a sign. Mary sent Juan Diego to pick roses where only desert plants grew. She arranged the roses in Juan's cloak and sent him back to the bishop. When Juan opened his tilma before the bishop, he discovered an image of the Virgin of Guadalupe imprinted on it. *Today's readings: Isaiah 30:19–21, 23–26; Psalm 147:1–2, 3–4, 5–6; Matthew 9:35–10:1, 5a, 6–8.*

