

Aloha Ku'u Hoanana / 'Ohana Aloha Nui'la

December 10, 2023

OUR ADVENT JOURNEY:

Behold the Lord will come
to save the nations!

Now that the door of year 2023 Advent Season is wide opened with our First Sunday of Advent already behind us, we now usher in the **Second Week of Advent** with another violet candle lit, visually reminding us of our spiritual journey that we are undertaking as Christians to soon celebrate the Nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ!

Let us be attentive in this 2nd Week of Advent to our Liturgy of the Word focusing on the message of the precursor of Jesus Christ, John the Baptist, **“a voice crying out in the desert, prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.”**

What pathways in our hearts are crooked that we need to face and straightened? So, that with humbled and cleansed hearts we may celebrate the wonder of **Word made Flesh** and be sharers of the abundant and amazing gifts of graces that is given to a heart ready to accept?

Just as in the days of John the Baptist, men and women had the need to repent and return to God in conversion of their hearts, our need to do so are no different.

All of us by the supernatural grace of our baptism were made heirs and sons and daughter of God, yet we need to continuously reclaim and recommit our lives as such sons and daughters, in a world that is often absent of God.

I am continuously greeted by well-meaning men and women at store counters at every corner, **“Happy Holidays,”** and I respond with a smile **“Mele Kalikimaka or Merry Christmas.”** Realizing that as a Christian I need to remind myself first and others that **“Jesus Christ is the reason for Christmas...no other reason.”**

Lest we be fooled by the cunning Evil One who whispers that **“we have all time in the world to turn back to God,”** this week we recall and reflect on the Word of God in our 2nd Reading; as St. Peter warned; **“Do not ignore the fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years is like one day.” 2 Peter 3:8.**

This week let us revisit our Scripture Readings – Word of God, and opening our bibles reflectively read **Isaiah 40: 1-5, 9 -11, 2 Peter 3: 8 – 14 & Mark 1: 1-8.** (When there is a gap in verses, as in the example of Prophet Isaiah today, you read in Isaiah chapter 40: verses 1-5, then skip and read verses 9 – 11.)

MAHALO to Parishioners who were able to Attend the Advent Confessions-Penance Service.

We are grateful to the confessors who assisted our parish Advent Confession – Penance Service this past Monday, December 4th; Frs. Khan & Boniface from St. Jude, Frs. Eric M.S. from St. Joseph, Fr. Siegfried of Immaculate Conception, and Fr. Ed from Our Lady of Perpetual Help.

Early Church Fathers have called the Sacrament of Confession – Penance “our second baptism,” referring to the fact that at each Confession we make sincerely we are like those who have been baptized and brought to spiritual rebirth - life in Jesus Christ. Many prominent exorcists have stated, such as late +Fr. Gabriel Amorth who did over 60,000 exorcisms and others such as Fr. Chad Ripberger and Fr. Carlos Martins that “Sacrament of Confession is more powerful than exorcisms, for in the Sacrament of Confessions we are delivered from our sins confessed and given the supernatural grace of God...no Evil can enter such a soul.”

This coming Week's Neighboring Parishes Advent Confessions: Monday, 7:00pm at St. Jude, Makakilo, Tuesday, 7:00pm at Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Ewa Beach, and Wednesday, 7:00pm at Immaculate Conception, Ewa.

ADVENT SPIRITUAL READING:

Holy Moments, A Handbook for the Rest of your Life, 116 paged spiritual books by Matthew Kelly, a well-known Catholic author and speaker is available for our spiritual reading this Advent. Please take a book with you and read it as part of your spiritual nourishment for your mind and soul this Advent.

Our Mahalo to Holy Trinity Parish (Fr. Michael ofm cap.) and to Catholic Ministry of St. Michael (via Cathy Agor) who have graciously donated the books to the parish.

CHRISTMAS STAMPS: Did you know that U.S. Postal Department prints every year Christmas Madonna Stamps (Blessed Mother with Child Jesus) during Christmas Season? But it stopped printing them on certain years due to their explanation that **“not enough postal patrons ask for Madonna Christmas Stamps.”**

When purchasing Postal Stamps to mail your Christmas Cards or any other envelopes especially during this Season of Christmas, ask for the Madonna Christmas Stamps. As Christians we need to let the Postal Department know that we still prefer Madonna Christmas Stamps to Santa Claus, reindeers, Christmas trees and others.

What a beautiful way in which we can continue to evangelize others in our Christian Faith even in such simple ways as using the Madonna Christmas Stamps and greeting others **“Mele Kalikimaka or Merry Christmas”.**

Have a blessed week in the Lord!
Fr. Paulo ofm cap.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RETIREMENT FUND FOR RELIGIOUS: Support a lifetime of service. Women and men religious have spent their lives serving others in prayer, ministry, education and care for those in need—usually for little or no pay. Today, their religious communities do not have enough retirement savings. As they age, they require essential care and medications. Please support them by giving to the Retirement Fund for Religious. Your donation makes a difference for nearly 25,000 senior men and women religious. Please give generously.

ADVENT PENANCE SERVICES: Listed is the Leeward Vicariate Advent Penance Service: **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.**

WORD OF LIFE: "Perhaps one of your friends has become pregnant unexpectedly. As someone who has been there, I encourage you to support your friends in her new journey of being a mother." Learn how at www.respectlife.org/support-her. USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities "10 Ways to Support Her When She's Unexpectedly Expecting"

WEEKLY READINGS

Dec 10 Sun: 2nd Sunday of Advent

Is:40:1-5, 9-11; Ps:85; 2 Pt:3:8-14; Mk:1:1-8

Dec 11 Mon: Advent Weekday

Is:35:1-10; Ps:85:9ab, 10, 10-12, 13-14; Lk:5:17-26

Dec 12 Tue: Our Lady of Guadalupe

Rv:11:1-19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab; Jdt:13:18bcde, 19; Lk:1:39-47

Dec 13 Wed: Saint Lucy, Virgin and Martyr

Is:40:25-31; Ps:103:1-2, 3-4, 8 & 10; Mt:11:28-30

Dec 14 Thur: Saint John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor of the Church

Is:41:13-20; Ps:145; 19, 10-11, 12-13ab; Mt:7:11-15

Dec 15 Fri: Advent Weekday

Is:48:147-19; Ps:1:1-2, 3, 4, & 6; Mt:11:16-19

Dec 16 Sat: Advent Weekday

Sir:48: 1-4, 9-11; Ps:80:2ac, & 3b, 15-16, 18-19; Mt:17:9a, 10-13

NEXT SUNDAY READINGS:

Is:61:1-2a, 10-11 : The spirit of the Lord God enabled Isaiah to proclaim good news to the poor, healing to the brokenhearted, liberty to captives, and freedom to prisoners.

1 Thes:5:16-24: Paul exhorted the faithful of Thessalonica to "Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing. In all circumstances give thanks.

Jn:1:6-8, 19-28: John the Baptizer was not the light but testified to it. He declared himself "the voice of one crying out in the desert, make straight the way of the Lord."

PARISH CALENDAR

Sat, Dec 9	5:00 p.m.	Mass
Sun, Dec 10	7:00 a.m.	Mass
	9:00 a.m.	Mass(Live Stream)
	5:00 p.m.	Mass
Mon, Dec 11	7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of the Hours/Rosary
	8:00 a.m.	Communion Service
	9:30-11 am	Food Pantry Open
Tue, Dec 12	7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of the Hours/Rosary
	8:00 a.m.	Communion Service
Wed, Dec 13	7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of the Hours/Rosary
	8:00 a.m.	Communion Service
	9:30-11 am	Food Pantry Open
Thur, Dec 14	7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of the Hours/Rosary
	8:00 a.m.	Communion Service
Fri, Dec 15	7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of the Hours/Rosary
	8:00 a.m.	Communion Service
Sat, Dec 26	7:30 a.m.	Liturgy of the Hours/Rosary
	8:00 a.m.	Mass
	3:15-4:00 p.m.	Confession
	5:00 p.m.	Mass

A PAVING A DIRECT ROUTE

Whenever a highway changes from two lanes to four, you can often see the improvements. The old highway follows the dips and curves of the landscape. The new highway better controls the landscape. It is straighter and more level. The engineers have figured out how to improve the road, and citizens have supported the additional expense.

People like straight highways. They are quicker, safer, and more pleasant.

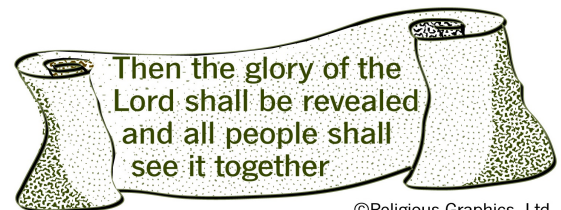
In the prophecy of Isaiah, a voice cries out, "In the desert prepare the way of the Lord!" John the Baptist quoted this passage to prepare people for the coming of Jesus.

Make a straight highway in the wasteland. Fill in the valleys and lower the mountains. Make a smooth, direct road in your spiritual life.

During Advent we prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ in our lives. In the past we formed habits as sturdy as two-lane roads. They get us where we want to go, but sometimes not by the most direct route.

We have only a few weeks until Christmas. It is time to move the roadblocks and detours that keep us from encountering Christ. Hardness of heart, stinginess of time, or unbending habits —which of these needs repair on your highway toward Christ?

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SECOND SUNDAY OF ADVENT



Open Our Hearts

God of boundless love,
you are the source of all blessings.
Be our companion through these Advent days.
Bless our nativity scene.
Draw us into the circle of love
that surrounds the newborn Christ child.

Help us prepare our hearts
to welcome him home
with a deep abiding love
and with gratitude for his friendship.
Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Sunday, December 10, 2023 Prepare a Home for the Lord



Today's readings: Isaiah 40:1–5, 9–11; Psalm 85: 9–10, 11–12, 13–14; 2 Peter 3:8–14; Mark 1:1–8. The Lord is always coming toward us, seeking a home in our lives. Advent mindfully prepares our hearts as a permanent dwelling place for the Lord. The letter of St. Peter urges us to “conduct ourselves with holiness and devotion, waiting for and hastening the day of God” (2 Peter 3:11–12). Time is precious during this year’s short Advent as it competes with the secular frenzy of the season. Stay attuned to the spirit of Advent as you prepare for the coming of our Lord.

Adorn your surroundings with reminders to keep your focus on spiritual preparation. Religious imagery forms us in powerful ways. The practice of setting up a nativity scene

at home begins in Advent and continues through the celebration of the Epiphany. St. Francis of Assisi began this custom in 1223 when he celebrated Christmas with his brothers at Greccio with a staging of the stable in Bethlehem that included live animals. This tradition quickly spread, and people began to construct nativity scenes in their homes, churches, and public spaces. You might set up your entire scene all at once, leaving the crib empty for the Christ child to arrive on Christmas Eve. Or set up the scene slowly, placing the figures far from the scene and moving them closer day by day with the Magi arriving on Epiphany with gifts for the child Jesus.



THIS WEEK AT HOME

Monday, December 11

Christ Will Come Again

Today's readings paint a hope-filled picture of the way Christ comes to us at the end of time, often referred to as the *parousia*. At this time, illness, disability, drought, hunger, sin, conflict, and every source of discord will be wiped away and the full glory of the Lord will be revealed. Prayerfully, reflect on today's readings, resplendent with the promise that our God comes to save us. *Today's readings: Isaiah 35:1–10; Psalm 85: 9–10, 11–12, 13–14; Luke 5:17–26.*

Tuesday, December 12

Our Lady of Guadalupe

Today we continue to celebrate Mary's radiant appearance to Juan Diego on Tepeyac Hill, Mexico, in 1531. Mary, whose features were those of a Mesoamerican Indian, offered hope to the oppressed native peoples, who in turn, named her *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe*. The Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe is widely celebrated around the world. Venerate our patron saint of the Americas in a special way today: place her image near the Advent wreath, prepare a special meal, pray the Rosary, recall the miraculous story of her apparition and all that followed. *Today's readings: Isaiah 11:1–10; Psalm 72:1–2, 7–8, 12–13, 17; Luke 10:21–24. Zechariah 2:14–17 or Revelation 11:19a; 12:1–6a, 10ab; Judith 13:18bcde, 19; Luke 1:26–38 or Luke 1:39–47.*

Wednesday, December 13

St. Lucy

The Church remembers St. Lucy, a fourth-century martyr whose name means “light,” as the patron saint for those with eye disease. Many cultures celebrate St. Lucy with festive customs. In Sweden, this day is called *Luciadagen*. The eldest daughter of the family dresses up as St. Lucy and greets the family with special breads. Legends tell of St. Lucy's handing out bread in the time of famine. Make or purchase two loaves of braided bread and adorn them with

candles. Enjoy one and surprise a neighbor with the other. *Today's readings: Isaiah 40:25–31; Psalm 103:1–2, 3–4, 8, 10; Matthew 11:28–30.*

Thursday, December 14

St. John of the Cross

Today the Church commemorates this saint from sixteenth-century Spain: St. John of the Cross, whose spiritual writings continue to offer inspiration. Severe persecution and suffering in prison unlocked his poetic gifts. His memorial is placed in Advent because his writings so often highlight Christ as light penetrating the darkness. Light a candle to remember John of the Cross as a reminder that Christ, our light, illuminates our hearts especially in times of suffering. *Today's readings: Isaiah 41:13–20; Psalm 145:1, 9, 10–11, 12–13ab; Matthew 11:11–15.*

Friday, December 15

Follow the Lord

The response of today's responsorial psalm proclaims, “Those who follow the Lord will have the light of life.” Catholics often celebrate the sacrament of reconciliation each Advent as an essential element of their spiritual preparation for the celebration of Christmas. We need help to resist the temptation to sin and to grow in holiness. Do not delay. Seek reconciliation this Advent and make room in your heart to welcome Jesus. *Today's readings: Isaiah 48:17–19; Psalm 1:1–2, 3, 4, 6; Matthew 11:16–19.*

Saturday, December 16

Las Posadas

Las Posadas (from Spanish meaning “the inns”) is a widely observed Advent tradition celebrating Christian hospitality beginning December 16 and continuing for nine days until December 24. The *posadas* symbolize Mary and Joseph's difficult search for a place to stay. There are many creative ways to observe *Las Posadas*. Through the celebration we are reminded that by welcoming the poor and needy, we also welcome Jesus. *Today's readings: Sirach 48:1–4, 9–11; Psalm 80: 2ac, 3b, 15–16, 18–19; Matthew 17:9a, 10–13.*

