

Advent Wreath Prayers for St. Xavier

The season of Advent, as the name implies, is about new beginnings. It is the beginning of the Church's liturgical year. It is a holy season in preparation for the commemoration of the birth of our Savior. It is also a time when we as a parish community look at the many blessings we have received and how we can best share our blessings with those in need. Our parish has embarked on a collection of non-perishable food items for the people served by the St. Leo Food Pantry. We are collecting gifts for children and the elderly in impoverished areas through the Giving Tree.

Now, we turn our sights to the needs of peoples across this country, and the globe, who are served by our sisters and brothers in various Jesuit ministries. St. Xavier has had a long-standing relationship with our sister parish in Peru, Our Lady of the Nativity. The generosity of our parishioners has prompted the ask to support, in some way, the ministries of two former Jesuit associates: Fr. Sossy who is now in Kenya, and Fr. Jerome who serves in India.

Our parish staff and leadership has decided to contribute to these ministries, both far and near, as a witness to our Christian vocation. A portion of our monthly tithing will help the apostolic works of these various ministries, and as such, remind us that we are all brothers and sisters under one Father.

As we begin this holy Season of Advent, marked with the successive lighting of candles throughout the four weeks, we will pray for each of the ministries, that our temporal gifts and our prayers may bring health, peace, and joy to those for whom they are intended. May this Advent remind us that the Christ came into the world for all people.

WEEK 1

As we prepare our hearts this Advent for the coming of Our Lord, we light one candle and pray for the people whom we see each day who live on the margins of our society, and for those who live in the shadows, served by food pantries, shelters and social agencies in our city.

WEEK 2

As we make straight the path for the Lord, we light two candles and pray for those people who live in doubt, anxiety, and fear, who are comforted by the face of Christ in pregnancy shelters, counselling centers, and pastoral services throughout our nation.

WEEK 3

As we rejoice that our time of Our Lord is near, we light three candles and pray for the people who we may never meet, living in makeshift houses of adobe or thatch, spending their days in search of clean water, food, and medicine, especially those served by our Jesuit Fathers in Peru, Kenya, and India.

WEEK 4

As we get ready to greet Our Lord when he comes, we light four candles and pray for the human family, redeemed by the Son of God who became incarnate for our salvation. May we who have kept vigil these four weeks be reminded that the gift of God's Son is a gift meant to be shared with all the world.

Let us pray together,

Come, Lord Jesus,

open our eyes to see your love in this day and throughout this Advent Season. Make us attentive people so that we may truly meet you in the happy and painful events of our lives.

Give us the courage to face the darkness in our personal lives and in our nation that we may be a people of faith who are light for others.

Stir us in our complacency.

Give us compassion and tolerance for others so that we may stand in solidarity with those who are poor and disadvantaged, and work together to create a world of love, justice, and harmony.

Amen.