

November 29, 2026

First Sunday of Advent

Written by THE FAITHFUL DISCIPLE

Is 63:16b-17, 19b; 64:2-7 | 1 Cor 1:3-9 | Mk 13:33-37

GROW AS A DISCIPLE | PRAY, STUDY, ENGAGE, SERVE

As a parent and a former teacher, I know that one of the best ways to encourage good behavior in children is to catch them doing what is right and to praise them for it. Eager to please, children will do more of what gets them positive attention or reward. The prophet Isaiah tells us that, like a good parent, God will abundantly bless his children whom he finds doing right upon his return: "No ear has ever heard, nor eye ever seen, any God but you doing such deeds for those who wait for him." Scripture tells us that we can't even imagine what awaits those whom God finds living faithful to his word. Our task, then, is to always be vigilant, as Jesus' words today remind us: "Be watchful! Be alert."

GO EVANGELIZE

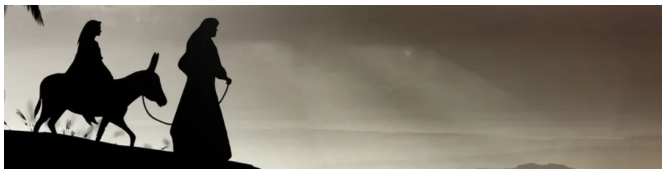
PRAYER, INVITATION, WITNESS, ACCOMPANIMENT

As we begin this Advent season, let us reflect on the fact that growth in discipleship might simply be paying more attention to doing what is right in every moment. But we know this is not always easy. We can take encouragement from St. Paul, who tells us today that God has bestowed his grace upon us in Christ Jesus, and that we have been "enriched in every way … so that [we] are not lacking in any spiritual gift as [we] wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ." As we seek to share faith with others, it's helpful to tap into the specific ways God has gifted us. Some of us are great at listening. Others offer encouragement and counsel. Perhaps others know how to explain things in a down-to-earth, easily understandable way. Still others are able to create beautiful things – through art, music, poetry – that draw people to encounter God's beauty and goodness. Think about what gifts God has given you, and find ways to lean into them in a more intentional way as you seek to share your faith with others.

STUDY

This Advent – especially if you've never done so before – take time to discover the spiritual gifts God has given you. Look to see if there is a *Called & Gifted™ Discernment Process* (Catherine of Siena Institute) being offered in your area, or another suitable spiritual gifts discernment workshop. This process will help you to grow in self-knowledge and to uncover the ways that God has uniquely gifted you to live your discipleship in the world.

Church of the Ascension
AscensionSaratoga.org | 408-725-3939



How to Advent on Formed.org

1. Counting Down to Christmas – Celebrating Advent as a Catholic.
2. Catholic Guide to the Advent Wreath – Finding Purpose in the Waiting.
3. The Jesse Tree Explained – The (Not) Christmas Tree You've Never Heard of.
4. There's More to Your Nativity Scene than You Thought.

Adventus: Spiritual Pilgrimage

Adventus: A Spiritual Pilgrimage for everyone this Advent and Christmas Season. This special documentary allows Catholics all around the world to unite and make a spiritual pilgrimage to the Holy Land to see the places associated with Christ's Birth.

Advent Reconciliation

Saturday, December 12, from 9:30a - 11a.

Our Giving Tree

-**Catholic Charities** relies on your generosity to provide support for individuals to be self-sufficient. Gift cards make the holidays brighter for Catholic Charities clients.
-The **Layette Program** welcomes infant clothing and other needed items and supplies. This program has been in existence throughout the years since 1955.

WEEKLY OFFERING *Nov 22*

-Total: $**4,278** ($2,979 + online: $1,299) Goal: $7,000.
-YTD Sunday: $118,847. Budget: $147,000.
-Campaign for Human Development: $**1,250.**
-Terrace Project: $**2,500.**
-Parish Building Fund: $**600.**
-General fund: $**2,500.**
Thank you for your generosity.

MASS INTENTIONS

Nov 28	Sat	05pm	Beverly Vizcaino +
Nov 29	Sun	07am	Ana Karen Sanchez (L)
		11am	Julyana Torres +
		05pm	Vincent C. + & Rita O. Tierney +
Nov 30	Mon	08am	Ken & Jennifer McKeever (L)
Dec 01	Tue	08am	Heidi Lee +
Dec 03	Thu	09am	Mary Lucas (L)
Dec 04	Fri	08am	Madeleine Welch Griffin +
Dec 05	Sat	09am	Theresa Stolz +



Learn from St. Francis

Our next *Faith Forward* Gathering
Dec. 6, Sunday, from 12:05pm
EMBRACING HUMILITY & POVERTY

Register at the **table** near our church's main entrance OR scan the **QR code >**

Light of Faith

"The light of Faith: this is how the Church's tradition speaks of the great gift brought by Jesus. In John's Gospel, Christ says of himself: "I have come as light into the world, that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness" (Jn 12:46). Saint Paul uses the same image: "God who said 'Let light shine out of darkness,' has shone in our hearts" (2 Cor 4:6).

- *Lumen Fidei,* encyclical on faith

Our Lady of Guadalupe and Message of Compassion

At the U.S. Catholic Bishops' (USCCB) fall plenary assembly on November 17, 2026, in Baltimore, American bishops reflected on the evangelizing message of Our Lady of Guadalupe and shared updates on the expanding "One Tilma, One Heart" missionary initiative ahead of the 2031 500th anniversary of the 1531 apparitions.

Bishop Daniel Flores reflected on how the message of Our Lady of Guadalupe calls the Church to show the same compassion for the poor and vulnerable in its work of evangelization.

Bishop Oscar Cantú of San Jose reported on the distribution of tilma replicas touched to the original image in Mexico City as part of the Intercontinental Guadalupe Novena. Replicas will arrive in U.S. dioceses for enthronements and parish programs starting in 2027.

The Wonder of America

In his pastoral letter "The Wonder of America," Archbishop José H. Gomez of Los Angeles marks the lead-up to the 500th anniversary of the apparitions of Our Lady of Guadalupe in 2031, calling for spiritual renewal and a fresh missionary push. Released in late 2026, the extensive letter spans five key areas:
-The American origin story.
-Personal vocation
-The Tilma*
-Heritage and saints
-Modern challenges

(*) a 16th-century agave-fiber cloak that bears the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe after apparitions to Saint Juan Diego