

November 23, 2021,

It is not enough to say we are Christians. We must live the faith, not only with our words, but with our actions. Pope Francis

Advent is nearly upon us. We strive to understand what the Lord is asking of us at this time. We await His coming. We are challenged to spend this time of Advent in fruitful use of our time: in not getting frustrated over the many things that we **wait** for ...waiting in lines, waiting for relatives to arrive, waiting for Covid restrictions to lift, etc. Waiting is an opportunity to grow in faith. Advent is a lesson in waiting. What will you do this Advent season to patiently await the Lord's coming and to show you are Christian not only with the words you utter, but the actions you perform?

Important Dates to Remember

Nov. 28, 2021	First Day of Advent – Year C – Gospel of Luke
Dec 8, 2021	Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Dec 12, 2021	Our Lady of Guadalupe – Patroness of the Americas
Dec 25, 2021	Christmas Day
Dec 26, 2021	Feast of the Holy Family
Jan 1, 2022	Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God
Jan 2, 2022	Epiphany
Jan 9, 2022	Baptism of the Lord.

The Pope's Monthly Intentions

For December 2021

For all Catechists

We pray for the catechists, summoned to announce the Word of God: may they be its witnesses, with courage and creativity and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

For January 2022

For true human fraternity

We pray for all those suffering from religious discrimination and persecution; may their own rights and dignity be recognized, which originate from being brothers and sisters in the human family.

For February 2022

For religious sisters and consecrated women

We pray for religious sisters and consecrated women; thanking them for their mission and their courage; may they continue to find new responses to the challenges of our times.

For March 2022

For a Christian response to bioethical challenges

We pray for Christians facing new bioethical challenges; may they continue to defend the dignity of all human life with prayer and action.

Christmas Stamps

I, for one, continue to send out many Christmas cards because I especially enjoy receiving them in the mail. If you also send out cards through the mail, this is a reminder to consider asking for the religious Christmas stamps at the post office when you buy your stamps for this Christmas season. An example of this year's stamp. Others from previous years are available.



Cathy Bouchard's Communiqué #3

I am including Cathy Bouchard (National Spiritual Development Chairperson) Communiqué #3 in its entirety as it has many Advent resources that can be used throughout the Advent season. I have already begun to use some of them, one as the beginning outline of a reflection I created for the upcoming provincial executive's zoom meeting on November 27th and another which examines my conscience in preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. I plan to take part in the two retreats listed below and I hope that others will also take these opportunities which are provided.

Dear sisters in the League,

November 28th, the first Sunday of Advent, marks the beginning of the new liturgical year and begins Year C with the Gospel of Luke.

Two Advent retreats have been planned for members. The first, *Prepare your Heart*, led by Susan Campbell, director of Mount St. Francis Retreat Centre (Cochrane, Alberta), will help members enter into the season of Advent and will be available on November 28th. *In Thy Dark Streets* led by Friar Michael Perras OFM, will be available for the third Sunday of Advent (December 12th). The retreat links will be posted on their given date to the national website and Facebook page.

Please encourage your diocesan counterparts to share these resources to help members prepare for this important part of their church lives.

Advent Resources

“**Hope and Joy at Advent**” (December 1st), part two of *Living with Christ Webinar Series*, featuring Simone Brosig, liturgist, and author of *Holy Labours*. “This season of preparation for Christmas is supposed to be a time of joy, but often becomes a time of anxiety and worry. How can we prepare ourselves and our families to celebrate the true nature of the season?” Registration is \$9.95 at en.novalis.ca/products/hope-and-joy-at-advent?_pos=59&_sid=7656055dc&_ss=r.

Creighton University Online Ministries' Praying Advent offers various Advent resources for the liturgical year. Visit onlineministries.creighton.edu/CollaborativeMinistry/Advent/ for more information.

Stepping Beyond, an Advent retreat offered by Pray as You Go, inspired by Pope Francis' encyclical letter *Fratelli Tutti*, on fraternity and social friendship. “Other words for fraternity include fellowship; friendship and companionship, all words that are central to the Christian message especially at Christmas. The weeks of Advent are a call to a deeper reflection on the life of Jesus as He stepped beyond His world into ours as our companion and friend. Advent is a time to help us prepare to welcome Jesus our Saviour, God made man in Bethlehem and to hear His call to Step Beyond ourselves” (Pray as You Go). Learn more at pray-as-you-go.org/article/advent-2021-stepping-beyond.

My Catholic Life! "... Presents the beauty and splendor of the Catholic faith in a down-to-earth and practical way." Enjoy excellent materials for daily reflections, prayers, inspiring quotes and more that can be read independently or as a group from mycatholic.life/.

A Lesson in Waiting Advent Retreat from Busted Halo is suitable for individuals or a parish council meeting using a handout. The resource can be found at drive.google.com/file/d/1uAnS6sgSN6bOuyi_bhq0UfKih010sD0u/view.

Online Advent Book Discussion facilitated by the Henri Nouwen Society. The book selected for the Advent discussion that begins November 24th is the newly released *Community* by Henri Nouwen, edited by Stephen Lazarus. For more information, visit henrinouwen.org/resources/join-advent-book-discussion/.

Prayers for Advent by *Loyola Press*. Various resources are available, including an Advent prayer packet that provides two organized prayer services and a guided reflection on the name Emmanuel, "God with us," and invites families to focus on where they most need God to be with them in their lives. Download these resources from loyolapress.com/catholic-resources/liturgical-year/advent/prayers/.

Advent Stations: "... Takes [Catholics] on a tour of the Old Testament... and provides a way to ponder the mystery of how God prepared the world to receive His Son at the moment of the Annunciation" (Liturgies.net). They can be prayed with a group of faithful, family or alone. For more information, visit liturgies.net/Advent/adventstations.htm.

"7 Advent and Christmas Carol Quotes that You Can Pray with this Season" is an excellent resource for a parish council Advent supper. It offers reflections connected to specific religious carols with visuals and audio. Available from Catholic Link at catholic-link.org/7-advent-christmas-carols-quotes-prayer/.

Advent Examination of Conscience can be used for individual or reflection as a group. Available at waterloocatholics.org/documents/2019/12/HO-Advent%20Exam%20of%20Conscience.pdf.

Novena to Our Lady of Guadalupe: Best for individual or small group reflection each day during the Novena from December 4th-12th. Available from Catholics Online at catholic.org/prayers/novenas/novena.php?id=13. A novena to Our Lady of Guadalupe is also available through downloading the Pray Catholic Novenas application at pray.app.link/ourladyofguadalupenovena.

I hope these resources will be helpful to you and your community of members.

Cathy Bouchard
National Second Vice-President and Chairperson of Spiritual Development



A Wish for the Week Ahead, for Advent and the coming year

May you give yourself permission to time out the world so you can tune into your own life.
May you step out of the smallness of fear and into the spaciousness of compassion, where
there is room to breathe, and plenty to share.

May you remember the difference between need and want, and that kindness cannot be
hoarded.

May you drink in joy and laughter, and may they revive your weary spirit like a fresh cup of
coffee.

Nanea Hoffman

I wish for each of you and your families, a Blessed Advent, a Wondrous and Merry Christmas
and a very Happy and Joyous New Year. In Italian, Buon Natale e Felice Anno Nuovo.

Ciao for now and God bless.

Laura Esposito

BC & Yukon CWL Spiritual Development Chairperson