

SPPC HEBDO 2021

December 6, 2020

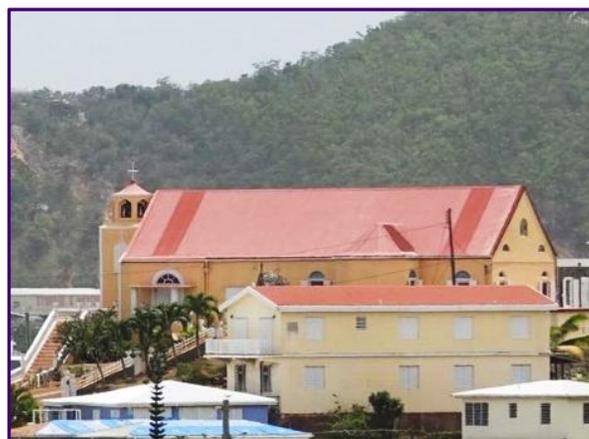
2nd Week of Advent



“Behold, I am sending my messenger ahead of you; he will prepare your way. A voice of one crying out in the desert: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight his paths.'” **Mark 1 : 2b-3**



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Advent Season has started

We are at the dawn of a new liturgical year. It is also the beginning of a new cycle of readings that will be proclaimed at Mass. For the next 52 weeks, we get the Sunday Gospel Readings from the **Gospel of Mark**.

The observance of the Season of Advent is found in most Christian denominations. It is considered as a time of expectant waiting and preparation for both celebrating the Nativity of Christ at Christmas and the return of Christ at the Second Coming. Traditionally, the first day of Advent falls on the 4th Sunday before Christmas, between November 27th and December 3rd.

The term comes from the Latin “adventus” that means "coming; arrival". It is translated in Greek as *Parousia* which is the term used in the New Testament to announce the Second Coming of Christ. Thus, the season of Advent brings to our attention three different perspectives of the "coming of Christ":

- 1) The historic coming of Christ among us as a Man, through the mystery of the Incarnation.
- 2) The final return of Christ at the end of time to bring the work of salvation to its full completion.
- 3) The coming of Christ to us through the “sometimes ordinary” daily events of our lives.

Advent is also an invitation to be mindful of the graces received from the Lord, in our past and in our present and revisit them with a grateful heart.

During the Advent season, one of the most significant rituals is the lighting of an Advent Wreath. The candles on the Advent wreath are offered to our meditation as symbols of Hope, Love, Joy and Peace. A fifth candle, called the Christ candle is lit on Christmas to remind Christians that Jesus Christ, the Light of the World comes to illuminate our lives and souls.

LITURGICAL NOTES FOR ADVENT

1. What is Advent? Advent is one of the five (5) liturgical seasons of the Church’s cycle or year. The season of Advent marks the beginning of the Liturgical Cycle of the Roman Catholic Church and some Reformed churches. There are always four (4) Sundays in Advent although not always four full weeks.

2. The color of the Mass vestments during Advent is VIOLET. It is meant to be reminiscent of the night sky shortly before dawn. It also highlights the penitential character of the season. For a Christian is one who is always looking forward to the dawn...alert to the coming of dawn. A Christian lives in hope.



3. The third Sunday of Advent is known as **Gaudete Sunday** or **Rejoice Sunday**. Gaudete is the Latin word that means “Rejoice”. This is why priests have the option of wearing pink on this particular Sunday. The third Sunday of Advent indicates that the season of penance is coming to an end and soon we will be rejoicing in the celebration of Christmas.

4. During Advent the Gloria is not sung or recited at the beginning of Mass. We refrain from singing it so as to sing it with greater fervor at Christmas when the first words of this ancient hymn were used to announce the birth of Christ-light of the world.

5. The Spirit of Advent. Advent is a season of expectation, preparation and penance. Advent has a dual character. As a **season of penance**, it prepares us spiritually for the celebration of the Christmas season, in which we, Catholics, celebrate and reflect upon the mystery of the Incarnation of the Word of God, typically known as the first coming.

Advent also has an eschatological character filled with a **sense of expectation**. As such, Advent is a time to put the house of our soul in order before the arrival of the guest of honor Christ Jesus, who will come unannounced like a thief in the night, in His second coming. Every time we, Catholics, recite the Creed, we say: “He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead and His kingdom will have no end.”

6. The Advent Wreath located to the side of the sanctuary reminds us during the darkest time of the calendar year, that God’s Grace breaks through the darkness of the world in surprising ways—just as it did with the birth of a Jewish baby named Jesus, 2,000 years ago. The circular shape of the Advent wreath represents eternity and God’s unending mercy.

7. The Candles symbolize the light of God coming into the world through the birth of His Son. The four outer candles represent the period of waiting during the four Sundays of Advent, which themselves symbolize the four centuries of waiting between the prophet Malachi and the birth of Christ.

A PRAYER FOR ADVENT

God of power and mercy open our hearts and minds. Remove the things that hinder us from receiving Christ with joy so that we may share His wisdom and become one with Him when He comes in glory, for He lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

THE SYMBOLISM OF THE CANDLES

The 1st Candle (Purple) is called THE PROPHET'S CANDLE or CANDLE OF **HOPE**. It is a reminder that the prophets in the Old Testament waited in hope for the Messiah. God is faithful and we trust Him and adamantly rely on Him to fulfill the promises He made to us. We can put our trust and hope in Him as it is written: "And again 'The Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; the Gentiles will hope in him.' May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit." (Romans 15:12-13)

The 2nd Candle (Purple) is called THE BETHLEHEM CANDLE or OF PREPARATION or OF FAITH, more traditionally, CANDLE OF **PEACE** – The word "Preparation" means to "get ready". For the Christian, it is a time to get ready to welcome our Lord and Savior. Let us refer, once again, to the Bible as we read in the Book of the Prophet Isaiah: "A voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him. Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth. And all mankind will see God's salvation.'" (Luke 3: 4-6)



The 3rd CANDLE (Pink) is called THE SHEPHERD'S CANDLE or THE CANDLE OF JOY. "An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and said to them, '... I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.'" (Luke 2:10). The Third Sunday of Advent is called "Gaudate Sunday" or SUNDAY OF **JOY**.

The 4th Candle (Purple) is called THE ANGEL CANDLE or THE CANDLE OF **LOVE**. The angels announced the good news of a Savior and Peace of earth to people of good will. "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life... God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him." (John 3:16-17)

The 5th CANDLE (White) is known as the **CHRIST** CANDLE – It reminds us of Jesus-Christ, the pure and innocent Lamb of God who was born to die for us so that we can be born to eternal life. The color white also reminds us of the white baptismal vestment symbolizing our spiritual birth in Christ. "The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, 'Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!'" (John 1:29)

Together, as a community, let us also pray that our hearts be open to the unknown blessings and graces that are still reserved for us: *"O Come! O Come, Emmanuel! Maranatha!"*

Tuesday, December 8, 2020
SOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION
OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN MARY

Masses are scheduled at SPPC at 7:00 AM (English) – 12:00 PM (Spanish)