

Fragments

DECEMBER 2022 NEWSLETTER

ODCCW Mission Statement

*To promote among our Catholic women a greater devotion to Christ and the Church,
as we share the Blessed Mother's role of bringing others to Christ
through spirituality, leadership, and service.*



ADVENT BLESSINGS

Janine Meckler
ODCCW President

*"Therefore encourage one another
and build one another up, just as you are doing."*

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Ladies of ODCCW, our world needs us. It needs our witness of love, hope, faith, and belief in the Holy Trinity put into action. We are called to set an example of prayer for our neighbor and for one another. We are called to build one another up in holiness. Division and anxiety are all too common
(continued on next page)

today. I want to challenge each one of us as I challenge myself to seek out and pray deliberately and daily for the many divisions and needs in our world. We can pray for an end to abortion, for families, especially those in need of healing, and for those who have no one to pray for them. The list goes on. We can and must put these prayers into action with love and support. Jesus was and still is acutely aware of the human condition. Jesus met His days with prayer, action, and great compassion. May the love of Christ transform us.



Blessings to you and your loved ones on this day and throughout the Holiday Season.

Janine Meckler
ODCCW President

**MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW
SPIRITUAL ADVISOR...**

Fr. Chris Heath

ODCCW Spiritual Advisor

Happy New Year (liturgically speaking)!

Recently we celebrated the Solemnity of Christ the King of the Universe. St. Paul wrote to the Colossians, "All things were created through (Jesus), and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together" (Col 1:16-17). Every aspect of our lives belongs to Christ, and He wants to reign over us for our protection in this world and for life eternal.

I am mindful that there are areas of my life over which Christ is NOT Lord -

words, actions, thoughts that are not pleasing to Him, things that are disordered, sins I must regularly confess. I must bring these under Christ's rule!

As we enter the Season of Advent, I invite you to use these next four weeks to consider one area of your life that is not in line with Jesus Christ - some thought, word, or deed that you want to work on so that Christ may reign over that part of your life!

Let's use Advent for what it was meant: to "prepare the way of the Lord, to make straight His paths" (Mk 1:3) so that we may be better ready to meet the Lord when He comes!

Fr. Chris



GRATITUDE

Susan Navarrete

ODCCW Past President

Hello, my Sisters in Christ,

I pray you all had a beautiful Thanksgiving feast with your family and friends. During this time of year, I am grateful for so many blessings and growth as I continue to journey with our Lord and Savior.

This year was bittersweet for my family due to my mother Isabel's passing. There will be many first holidays without my mom. Though sad, as she will truly be missed, I am comforted knowing she is with God in Heaven.

Gratitude helps us see God.

Gratitude opens our spiritual eyes. There's a beautiful cycle in giving God thanks. The more we thank Him, the more we see Him working in us and around us. Gratitude helps us sense God's presence, His personal care and His perfect timing. We are now in the Advent season which is the beginning of the spiritual year for the Catholic Church. The Advent Season is all about reflecting on how we can prepare our hearts and homes for Christ's birth in the world as it is today. It is a time for faith communities and families to remember, through prayer, reflections, special music, and good deeds, what the true meaning of Jesus' birth is. My prayer for you is to have a beautiful Advent

season and prepare for the coming of baby Jesus...

I wish you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! I look forward to seeing you in January 2023.

Blessings,

Susan Navarrete

ODCCW Past President



NOVEMBER GENERAL GATHERING



Photos from the ODCCW General Gathering on November 15.

Father Nicolaus Thai was our guest speaker at St. Martin De Porres Catholic Church on November 15. He spoke on a wonderful topic, "Received as Gifts: Life, Faith, and Giving Thanks", and presented it in a very relevant way. Father Thai was dynamic, engaging and shared some of his personal life story with our ODCCW women's group. Such an inspirational morning! Thank you to all the women who attended. See you on January 17 for our first General Gathering of 2023!

'Tis the Season

By Dr. Ida Pennella, PhD
ODCCW Emeritus Advisor

The "season" is upon us as, All Hallows' Eve ushers in All Saints' Day on November 1. This Catholic feast day was set by Pope Gregory III (731-741). The early Church during the fourth century in Antioch, celebrated the martyred saints during the Easter season "when martyrdoms increased during the persecutions of the late Roman Empire". In order to honor the "apostles and of all saints, martyrs and confessors, of all the just made perfect who are at rest throughout the world", Pope Gregory III consecrated a chapel in St. Peter's Basilica in Rome for the diocese of Rome to celebrate this feast. However, Pope Gregory IV (827-844) ordered the entire Church to celebrate the Holy Day.

"I am reminded of the biblical use of the term saint in the book of Acts. That it applies to each of us. All who are attempting to imitate the Christ in their lives merit the title of 'saint.' Some do it more fully than others and are willing to let go of more to get the job done."
- Matthew Fox in Confessions.

Looking forward to Thanksgiving Day on November 24, when we give praise to God for His bounty, and a mere three days later, November 27, Advent begins and ends on December 24, as we relive the most glorious event, the birth of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ on CHRISTMAS DAY.

Thanksgiving ... family reunions, turkey, pumpkin pie, and football ... as we celebrate let us as remember the Pilgrims who left England in 1620 to escape religious persecution and to establish a new colony that would give them a better life. The first Thanksgiving was celebrated in August with the Wampanoag Native people of North America who held many ceremonies to give thanks for their Creator's gifts; a birth of a child, good growing season, and a successful harvest.

As I give thanks and praise to our Lord this Thanksgiving, I am grateful for the month of November. I am grateful that I celebrated my 80th birthday on November 1st; that my husband Ralph and I celebrated our 62nd wedding anniversary on November 5th; that we have five married children, 13 grandchildren and 1 great grandson. One son was born on Veterans Day, one grandson was born on Thanksgiving Day, another grandson and my sister also have birthdays in November.

'Tis the Season (continued)

What are you thankful for this Thanksgiving? "*As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them.*"

- John Fitzgerald Kennedy.

"*Not what we say about our blessings, but how we use them, is the true measure of our thanksgiving.*" - W.T. Purkiser.

Thanksgiving Idea: Before you gather for the Thanksgiving dinner, give each person a piece of paper and pencil and a few minutes to gather their thoughts. Have them write what they are most thankful for. As you gather for grace, have everyone read out loud their response.

Advent Idea: Plan some simple pilgrimages to sites of spiritual significance if you can't visit the holy places like the Holy Land, Lourdes, or Fatima, you can...

1. Pray in front of the tabernacle
2. Visit a church other than your parish
3. Place flowers on a gravesite

Sources:

1. <http://www.plimoth.org/learn/multimedia-reference-library/read-articles-and-writings/thanksgiving-history>
2. <http://www.pilgrims.org/thanksgiving-history/> 3. <http://www.catholic.org/saints/allsaints/> 4. http://catholicism.about.com/od/holydaysandholidays/p/All_Saints_Day.htm 5. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2009/11/25/thanksgiving-quotes-inspi_n_370508.html 6. <http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/naming-the-days/view/10952>



6 SIMPLE WAYS TO ENRICH YOUR ADVENT SEASON

By Christina Antus

When I was a nominal Catholic, I liked to pretend that I knew a lot about Catholicism. Realistically, I knew slightly less than the average 7-year-old knows about the workings of a combustible steam engine. Back then, for me, Advent was the Catholic word for Christmas. I was, for a lack of a better term, a theological idiot.

Webster's Dictionary gives three meanings for the word Advent:

1. The arrival of a notable person, thing, or event.

The advent of Christ. The advent of television. The advent of the day my husband will finally pick up the pair of socks that have been in the same spot on the floor for six weeks.

2. The first season of the Christian church year, leading up to Christmas and including the four preceding Sundays.

So, all of December.

3. The coming or second coming of Christ.

If you knew this, you're doing better than I was most of my life. One of the many drawbacks of being a lukewarm Catholic is blindly going through life thinking you know enough about the faith, yet really knowing very little, including the why and how behind

most of the Church's teachings. For a number of years, I was part of the misinformation problem.

Advent is a trifacta of celebrations:

- Celebrating Christ's birth.
- Waiting for Christ to return to Earth again.
- Waiting for Christ to come into our hearts.

In a culture where everything is instant, we most certainly have lost the art of waiting. I blame Amazon because faith has no Prime shipping. We've lost the wonder and contemplation needed to appreciate the beauty and mystery of Advent. How can we find Christ at Christmas if we aren't watching and waiting for him? How can we appreciate the time we have to wait when we can't even wait two minutes for a slow Wi-Fi connection?

Advent gives us a chance to really put our minds where it matters most, on the next life. Here's how:

Quit being too busy to be spiritual

I know you have to do the thing with the thing before the thing and then you have to rush off to the other thing, and in the words of INXS, "There's not enough time..." If you wait for the time, it'll never come. So, make

6 SIMPLE WAYS TO ENRICH YOUR ADVENT SEASON (continued)

room. Turn off your phone. Set aside your to-do list. Light a candle. Say a prayer. Sit in the chapel.

Sacrifice all of the things

Then, substitute them with Jesus. Give up some part of your daily routine to fit in 20-30 minutes for Christ:

- Pray on your afternoon run.
- Dedicate a decade of the Rosary to someone you don't know who needs prayers. No Rosary? No problem. God gave you 10 fingers.
- Listen to Scripture or faith-based books/podcasts on your commute.
- Grab a Bible and pick a psalm. Find a sentence and make it your daily meditation. Apply those words to your day and try to uncover their meaning in your life.

Take your Christmas playlist to a higher level

Traditional Christmas music is one of my favorite things about Thanksgiving through Epiphany. There's a rumor going around that I even indulge in summer. Once or twice a week, or an hour before bed, listen to some spiritual songs, like a Gregorian chant or (my favorite) "Advent in Ephesus" by the Benedictines of Mary Queen of Apostles. They are prayers that feel as traditional as Bing Crosby's "White Christmas" but are spiritually uplifting, calming, and peaceful.

Give, give, give

You don't always have to give away money. Give your time, talent, and friendship. Be kind to an enemy. Pay someone a compliment who doesn't deserve it—bonus points if you do it after they're rude to you. Hold open a door for a stranger. Offer to help someone carry their groceries. Write inspirational quotes on cards that serve as compliments to people and randomly place them on car windshields. Remember that the smallest act of kindness is still a huge act of love.

Have Sunday Advent dinners

If the good Lord gave you the gift of culinary skills then by all means, give Glory to God with traditional Advent meals. I was given no such skills. I am a terrible cook. Use these meal ideas to spark conversation and invite talk about Advent, God, prayer, and, of course, to eat. Obviously, feasts are important to Catholics, since we celebrate one every day. End these meals by lighting the candle on your Advent wreath for the week.

Go to Confession

Advent is diet Lent. Cough it up, fess up, spill it out. Get into Confession because if Advent is the time to celebrate the Second Coming, we should be ready at all times. No one wants to greet Jesus with a dirty soul. I know. Gah. Bleh. Confession. Eye roll. I get it.

6 SIMPLE WAYS TO ENRICH YOUR ADVENT SEASON (continued)

No one who ever lived ever rolled their eyes at the idea of going to Confession harder than I did once upon a time. I'd even toss in a "pfffft" with the eye roll because I was a terrible person. The truth is, without Confession we really can't allow Christ into our hearts, which is needed for deeper conversion, and that is what this is all about. That's what it's always been about. If you do nothing else during Advent, consider, at least, Confession.

Let's go into Advent this year as Catholics ready and willing to serve our God. Let's be humbled and filled with everlasting love for each other so we can show the world what true Christianity is all about. Let us find this season the path of peace and the ability to let Christ enter our hearts so that one day when he comes, we can kneel in reverence, bow our heads, and know that we served our purpose in this life: serving and loving. You can't find either of those on Amazon.



ODCCW 2022-2023 GENERAL GATHERING & EVENT SCHEDULE

Tuesday, January 17, 2023

Location: ST. THOMAS MORE

Speaker: Father Eugene Lee

Address: 51 Market St.

Irvine, CA 92602

Register at: <https://www.odccw.org/event/011723-general-gathering/>

Tuesday, February 21, 2023

Location: ST. TIMOTHY

Speaker: TBD

Address: 29102 Crown Valley Pkwy.

Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

Saturday, March 11, 2023

ODCCW WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Location: CHRIST CATHEDRAL

Speaker: TBD

Entertainment: Bishop Vann

Address: 13280 Chapman Ave.

Garden Grove, CA

Tuesday, April 18, 2023

Location: HOLY TRINITY

Speaker: Renee Bondi

Address: 1600 Corporate Dr.

Ladera Ranch, CA 92694

Tuesday, May 16, 2023

MAY CROWNING

Location: CHRIST CATHEDRAL

Speaker: TBD

Address: 13280 Chapman Ave.

Garden Grove, CA