



[Jesus said,] “Be vigilant at all times and pray that you have the strength to escape the tribulations that are imminent.”

LUKE 21:36



SHUTTERSTOCK

Birth Day

Our *birth day* is not the anniversary of our birth—that is our *birthday*. Our birth day is the actual day of our birth. However, we do have a second birth day and it is this day to which this Sunday’s readings refer. We might call it our final birth day, the day when we are born into fulfillment. Jeremiah assures us that will be the day when God’s promises will be fulfilled in us. We will finally have a righteous leader; the nation will be safe, and the place where God dwells amid the people will be secure.

In the Gospel, Jesus is probably speaking figuratively about the end of the world—at least the end of the world as it is known to humans. However, it is not the end of everything, for after cosmic destruction takes place, “then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory” (Luke 21:27). After suffering the so-called birth pangs of the Messiah (see Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time), something new will appear; we will see that our redemption is at hand. We will be born into a new life in a new world.

Advent is the time to look forward to this new birth day of fulfillment. We do not simply await the anniversary of Jesus’ human birth day, for that day announced the coming of the final birth day of each of us. *His* birth announces *our* new birth.

Sr. Dianne Bergant, CSA

FOR *Reflection*

- ★ *How are you preparing for your final birth day?*
- ★ *What do you find most striking in today’s readings? Why?*

Dear Padre,

What do Advent-wreath candles signify?

Most Advent wreaths have three purple candles and one rose candle to echo the liturgical colors of the Church's Advent celebrations.

Whether the wreath is being used at home or in a church, the lighting of the candles should follow the liturgical colors of the Sundays of Advent. The vestments at Mass are purple during the first two weeks of Advent, so we light a purple candle on the first and second Sundays of Advent.

On the third Sunday, the Church celebrates *Gaudete* Sunday or Rejoice

Sunday, named after the first word of the day's traditional entrance verse (Philippians 4:4-5). The priest wears rose vestments at Mass as a sign of our brightening hope and joy, and on the Advent wreath we light the rose candle to reflect the theme of the liturgy. The fourth Sunday of Advent sees the lighting of the last purple candle.

Some churches and families add a fifth candle to their Advent practices by placing a white candle in the center of the wreath. They light this at Christmas, again echoing the Church's liturgical color for the season and rejoicing in Christ our

Lord, whose birth brings light and life to our world.

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Do you have a question for the Padre?

Go to DearPadre.org to send your question and to learn more about *Dear Padre*.



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A WORD FROM *Pope Francis*

Advent is a continuous call to hope: it reminds us that God is present in history to lead it to its ultimate goal, to lead it to its fullness, which is the Lord....God is not distant, he is always with us, to the extent that very often he knocks on the door to our heart.

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT, NOVEMBER 29, 2020

Calendar

Monday

NOVEMBER 29
Advent Weekday

Is 2:1-5
Mt 8:5-11

Tuesday

NOVEMBER 30
St. Andrew,
Apostle

Rom 10:9-18
Mt 4:18-22

Wednesday

DECEMBER 1
Advent Weekday
Is 25:6-10a
Mt 15:29-37

Thursday

DECEMBER 2
Advent Weekday
Is 26:1-6
Mt 7:21, 24-27

Friday

DECEMBER 3
St. Francis Xavier,
Priest
Is 29:17-24
Mt 9:27-31

Saturday

DECEMBER 4
Advent Weekday
Is 30:19-21, 23-26
Mt 9:35-10:1,
5a, 6-8

Sunday

DECEMBER 5
Second Sunday
of Advent
Bar 5:1-9
Phil 1:4-6, 8-11
Lk 3:1-6

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