

INTRODUCTORY RITES

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (Turn to the appropriate day)

GREETING

In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

- 1 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,
and the love of God,
and the communion of the Holy Spirit
be with you all.
And with your spirit.
- 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ.
And with your spirit.
- 3 The Lord be with you.
And with your spirit.

PENITENTIAL ACT

Brethren (brothers and sisters), let us acknowledge our sins,
and so prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacred mysteries.

After a brief pause for silence, one of the following forms is used:

- 1 *I confess to almighty God
and to you, my brothers and sisters,
that I have greatly sinned,
in my thoughts and in my words,
in what I have done and in what I have failed to do,
(And, striking their breast, they say:)*

*through my fault, through my fault,
through my most grievous fault;
therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin,
all the Angels and Saints,
and you, my brothers and sisters,
to pray for me to the Lord our God.*

May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life.
Amen.

- ② Have mercy on us, O Lord.
For we have sinned against you.

Show us, O Lord, your mercy.
And grant us your salvation.

May almighty God have mercy on us,
forgive us our sins,
and bring us to everlasting life.
Amen.

- ③ The celebrant makes the following or other invocations:

You were sent to heal the contrite of heart:
Lord, have mercy. *Or* Kyrie, eleison.
Lord, have mercy. Or Kyrie, eleison.

You came to call sinners:
Christ, have mercy. *Or* Christe, eleison.
Christ, have mercy. Or Christe, eleison.

You are seated at the right hand of the Father
to intercede for us:

Christ lights our darkness

Advent (literally, “at the coming”) prepares for the annual celebration of Jesus’ birth at Christmas and his revelation to the nations at Epiphany. The Church year moves in a cycle of promise–fulfillment–proclamation, often using the images of darkness and light to accentuate the movement. With Advent we enter the first part of the cycle—promise—as, in our northern hemisphere, the dark period of the solar year begins. God’s goodness gives us light, the light of the Messiah that dawns in the birth of Christ at Bethlehem and that will shine in its fullness at his coming again as King and Judge.

So in this Advent season as we begin a new Church year, we focus our attention on the demands of responding to the light of Jesus’ presence. We desire to let his vision and values enlighten us and transform the darkness of our lives so that we may become a light that will lead others to God.

The lectionary focus for this year on Matthew’s gospel is particularly suited to enhance our experience of enlightenment for following this way of commitment, conversion, and cooperation in the saving work of Jesus for our world today.

As we live through the seasons of the Church year, we will learn that the way of Christian discipleship always leads through the darkness of suffering to the experience of new life in Christ. Preparing the way is the first step to which our Advent experience is directed.

Praying and living the Advent season

An Advent wreath can help you and your household focus on waiting for Christ. Create a wreath from evergreen boughs and four candles (three purple and one rose or white for the joyful third week). Use the following format each week.

INVITATION TO PRAYER *As you light the candles (one for each week of Advent), invite all to share in the response.*

Leader: We look for light, and lo, darkness;
for brightness, but we walk in gloom! (*Isaiah 59:9*)

All: You, Lord, give light to my lamp;
you brighten the darkness about me. (*Psalms 18:28*)

SCRIPTURE READING *When the candles are lit, read aloud one of the Scripture readings from the day or Sunday. Either reflect quietly or invite each household member to respond to these questions:*

- How do I want Jesus to be my light this Advent (tonight)?
- How do the words of this reading help me to wait for Jesus to come?

CLOSING PRAYER (*adapted from Ephesians 5:1-2, 8-14*)

O God of light, help us be imitators of you and live in love.
For we were once darkness, but now we are light in the Lord.
Help us live as children of light,
for light produces every kind of goodness and truth.
Help us learn what is pleasing to the Lord.
We want to take no part in the works of darkness
but rather to expose them.
Christ will give us light! Amen.


 DEC
2

December 2

Look beyond, see the light!

Today we begin the new liturgical year. We will spend the year, like every liturgical year, following the life of Jesus from the time of John the Baptist's preaching to the great salvific events of Jesus' passion, death, resurrection, ascension, and giving of the Holy Spirit. Each liturgical season helps us meditate upon and pray over the life of Jesus, whom we strive to imitate as disciples.

Today's gospel paints a frightening picture of huge natural calamities heralding the end. We pray not to have to live through such events. Similarly, as Advent progresses we will hear the call of John the Baptist to repent and amend our ways. Being honest with our

sinfulness in the face of such preaching can be depressing.

But do not stop at the frightening side of these modes of preparing ourselves. Realize that we are being called to look beyond them to see the light, the beauty of God's promise. "When these signs begin to happen, stand erect and raise your heads because your redemption is at hand"

Our Redeemer is coming; indeed, he is in our midst. Regardless of what we must go through, whether it be disaster or the slavery of sin, our merciful and loving God is waiting to wrap warm and tender arms around us.

■ FR. MARK MILLER, CSSR

ENTRANCE ANTIPHON (Cf. *Psalm 25 [24]:1-3*)

To you, I lift up my soul, O my God. In you, I have trusted; let me not be put to shame. Nor let my enemies exult over me; and let none who hope in you be put to shame.

INTRODUCTORY RITES (*page 10*)**COLLECT**

Grant your faithful, we pray, almighty God, the resolve to run forth to meet your Christ with righteous deeds at his coming, so that, gathered at his right hand, they may be worthy to possess the heavenly Kingdom. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. *Amen.*

FIRST READING (*Jeremiah 33:14-16*)

The days are coming, says the LORD, when I will fulfill the promise I made to the house of Israel and Judah. In those days, in that time, I will raise up for David a just shoot; he shall do what is right and just in the land. In those days Judah shall be safe and Jerusalem shall dwell secure; this is what they shall call her: "The LORD our justice."

The word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

RESPONSORIAL PSALM (*Psalm 25:4-5, 8-9, 10, 14*)

R. To you, O Lord, I lift my soul.

Your ways, O LORD, make known to me;
 teach me your paths,
 guide me in your truth and teach me,
 for you are God my savior,

and for you I wait all the day. **R**
 Good and upright is the LORD;
 thus he shows sinners the way.
 He guides the humble to justice,
 and teaches the humble his way. **R**
 All the paths of the LORD are kindness and constancy
 toward those who keep his covenant and his decrees.
 The friendship of the LORD is with those who fear him,
 and his covenant, for their instruction. **R**

SECOND READING (*1 Thessalonians 3:12–4:2*)

Brothers and sisters: May the Lord make you increase and abound in love for one another and for all, just as we have for you, so as to strengthen your hearts, to be blameless in holiness before our God and Father at the coming of our Lord Jesus with all his holy ones. Amen.

Finally, brothers and sisters, we earnestly ask and exhort you in the Lord Jesus that, as you received from us how you should conduct yourselves to please God—and as you are conducting yourselves—you do so even more. For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus.
 The word of the Lord. *Thanks be to God.*

ALLELUIA (*Psalm 85:8*)

Alleluia, alleluia. Show us, Lord, your love; and grant us your salvation. *Alleluia, alleluia.*

GOSPEL (*Luke 21:25–28, 34–36*)

A reading from the holy Gospel according to Luke.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to his disciples: “There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on earth nations will be in dismay,

perplexed by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will die of fright in anticipation of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the **Son of Man**[†] coming in a cloud with power and great glory. But when these signs begin to happen, stand erect and raise your heads because your redemption is at hand.

“Beware that your hearts do not become drowsy from carousing and drunkenness and the anxieties of daily life, and that day catch you by surprise like a trap. For that day will assault everyone who lives on the face of the earth. Be vigilant at all times and pray that you have the strength to escape the tribulations that are imminent and to stand before the Son of Man.”

The Gospel of the Lord. *Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ*

PROFESSION OF FAITH (*page 13*)

PRAYER OF THE FAITHFUL

PREPARATION OF GIFTS (*page 16*)

PRAYER OVER THE OFFERINGS

Accept, we pray, O Lord, these offerings we make,
gathered from among your gifts to us,

• TAKING A CLOSER LOOK •

† Son of Man In Semitic languages, when connected to a collective noun, “son of” designates the individual member belonging to a group. Thus a “son of man” means a human being, especially in contrast to God. This title takes on an important meaning for Christians because the prophet Daniel (7:13) describes God’s final agent, a “son of man,” to whom all power is given to accomplish God’s rule in the world. Jesus adds further meaning by connecting the Son of Man with the suffering of his messianic task and with the forgiveness of sins that only God could do.

and may what you grant us to celebrate devoutly here below gain for us the prize of eternal redemption.

Through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

PREFACE (*Advent 1, page 17*)

COMMUNION ANTIPHON (*Psalm 85 [84]:13*)

The Lord will bestow his bounty, and our earth shall yield its increase.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

May these mysteries, O Lord,
in which we have participated,
profit us, we pray,
for even now, as we walk amid passing things,
you teach us by them to love the things of heaven
and hold fast to what endures.

Through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

SOLEMN BLESSING: ADVENT (*Optional, page 57*)

BLESSING & DISMISSAL (*page 56*) ❖

• RESPONDING TO THE WORD •

God declares that now is the time for fulfilling promises.

➔ *What promises do I most desire to be fulfilled?*

Paul encourages us to grow in love as we await Jesus' coming.

➔ *What act of loving kindness can I do today to show my eagerness for Jesus' coming?*

Jesus urges us to watch for him so as not to be completely surprised.

➔ *What daily anxieties make it hard to watch for Christ?*

Praying and Living the Eucharist

Praying with the Scriptures

The Bible's message is that God desires to be with us in our world for a relationship. God invites us into a relationship that will not end with death but will go on forever. Building and nurturing this relationship is what living with Christ is all about.

Each week our Sunday Scripture readings help us to deepen our relationship with Jesus. Through Scripture, we learn who God is and who we are. We also discover ways to grow in our relationship with God and with others. By reading, reflecting, and discussing the meaning of these readings, we find keys to imitating Jesus' example, making his vision and values our own and discovering what a relationship with God demands.

A EUCHARISTIC FORMAT: PATTERN FOR OUR SPIRITUALITY

In our Eucharist and also in our preparation for the Eucharist, we imitate Jesus' actions at the Last Supper—*take, bless, break, share*. Jesus' command to *do this in his memory* characterizes not just our worship but our very lives and mission as Christians.

Participating in the eucharistic liturgy and living eucharistic lives is our way of thanking Jesus and of celebrating and nurturing his continual presence with us, not only in church but in all the moments and situations of our daily lives. Through our deepening experience of Christ in word and sacrament, we announce and celebrate the good news of God's presence among us.

The elements of the simple eucharistic format—*take, bless, break,*

The Liturgical Calendar:

UNFOLDING THE MYSTERY OF CHRIST

One way the Church tells the story of God's saving activity is by its calendar. "Within the cycle of a year, she unfolds the whole mystery of Christ. Recalling thus the mysteries of redemption, the Church opens to the faithful the riches of her Lord's powers and mercies, so that they are in some way made present at all times, and the faithful are enabled to lay hold of them and become filled with saving grace" (Vatican II, *Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, #102). During this yearly cycle, we remember our story and deepen our understanding of its meaning for us.

The Church year is anchored by two segments: **Advent–Christmas–Epiphany** and **Lent–Holy Week–Easter. Pentecost** and the **Sundays in Ordinary Time** fill out the rest of the year. The overall pattern highlights the transitions from darkness to light to manifestation, and from promise to fulfillment to proclamation.

ADVENT, CHRISTMAS, AND EPIPHANY

Advent, the time of preparation for Christmas, begins on the fourth Sunday before Christmas. As December's darkness and short days permeate our lives, the Church proclaims that Christ comes as the light of the world. Christmas celebrates the mystery of God's incarnation—God-with-us as one of us in human flesh.

Christmas is followed by the Epiphany, celebrating the visit of the magi who traveled from afar to worship the babe in Bethlehem. They represent all the nations of the world searching for their savior. The revelation of God's light and the fulfillment of God's promise in Jesus lead to the proclamation of this good news. In the season after Epiphany, we share the news that God's love is available for every person, for all of creation!

A Treasury of Prayers

PRAYERS FROM THE BIBLE

The Lord's Prayer: found in Matthew 6:9-13 and in Luke 11:2-4, it is also used in our eucharistic liturgy (page 53)

Song of Moses: from Exodus 15 (page 307)

Paul's Prayers: from 1 Corinthians 1 (page 70), Ephesians 1 (page 441) and Romans 15 (page 90)

Canticle of Zechariah (Benedictus): Luke 1:68-79

Blessed be the Lord, the God of Israel,
for he has visited
and brought redemption to his people.
He has raised up a horn for our salvation
within the house of David his servant,
even as he promised through the mouth
of his holy prophets from of old:
salvation from our enemies
and from the hand of all who hate us,
to show mercy to our fathers
and to be mindful of his holy covenant
and of the oath he swore to Abraham our father,
and to grant us that,
rescued from the hand of enemies,
without fear we might worship him
in holiness and righteousness