



In the Catholic Church, Advent is a period of preparation, extending over four Sundays, before Christmas. The word Advent comes from the Latin *advenio*, "to come to," and refers to the coming of Christ. This refers, first of all, to our celebration of Christ's birth at Christmas; but second, to the coming of Christ in our lives through grace and the Sacrament of Holy Communion; and finally, to His second coming at the end of time.

Our preparations, therefore, should have all three comings in mind. We need to

prepare our souls to receive Christ worthily. We can better enjoy Christmas—all 12 days of it, from Christmas Day to Epiphany—if we revive Advent as a period of preparation. Abstaining from meat on Fridays, or not eating at all between meals, is a good way to revive the Advent fast. (Not eating Christmas cookies or listening to Christmas music before Christmas is another.) We can incorporate such customs as the Advent wreath, the Saint Andrew Christmas Novena, and the Jesse Tree into our daily ritual, and we can set some time aside for special scripture readings for Advent, which remind us of the threefold coming of Christ. Holding off on putting up the Christmas tree and other decorations is another way to remind ourselves that the feast is not here yet. Traditionally, such decorations were put up on Christmas Eve, but they would not be taken down until after Epiphany, in order to celebrate the Christmas season to its fullest.

ADVENT EVENSONG:

Sunday, December 1, 4:00pm at Holy Cross-Wendelin

RECONCILIATION DURING ADVENT:

Saturdays 3:00pm at St. Lawrence-Lawrenceville

Saturdays 4:00pm at St. Joseph-Olney

Sunday, December 1, 1:00pm (First Reconciliation/Advent Reconciliation) at St. Joseph-Olney

Sunday, December 1, 3:00pm at Holy Cross-Wendelin

Tuesday, December 10, 6:30pm at St. Lawrence-Lawrenceville

Thursday, December 19, 6:00pm at St. Sebastian at St. Sebastian and 7:00pm at St. Mary-Mt. Carmel

Sunday, December 22, 1:00pm at St. Joseph-Stringtown

CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Wednesday, December 18, 6:30pm at Holy Cross-Wendelin

CHRISTMAS EVE, Tuesday, December 24, MASS

4:00pm at St. Joseph-Olney (with the school children)

4:00pm at St. Lawrenceville-Lawrenceville (PSR children will sing at 3:30pm)

10:00pm at Holy Cross-Wendelin (the choir will begin at 9:00pm with a Christmas Cantata)

11:00pm at St. Joseph-Stringtown (the choir will begin at 10:30pm with a selection of Christmas hymns.)

CHRISTMAS DAY, Wednesday, December 25, MASS

8:30am at St. Joseph-Olney

9:00am at St. Lawrence-Lawrenceville

10:30AM at Holy Cross-Wendelin

(the choir will repeat it's Christmas Cantata, beginning at 9:15am)