

PRAYERS IN THE PEW™ MONTHLY

FAITH IN ACTION CALENDAR / HIGHLIGHTS

WEDNESDAY DEC 8	Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception
SUNDAY DEC 12	Our Lady of Guadalupe
TUESDAY DEC 28	Feast of the Holy Innocents, Martyrs

Faith Formation Companion to Prayers in the Pew™

→ MONTHLY SYNOPSIS ←

December 2021 – Advent is a special season of anticipation. It comes with a call to shift our preoccupation with material things to embrace more deeply the spirit of self-giving. The primary figure in Advent is Our Lady who receives the message of an angel with joy and changes the world by her selfless “Yes” to God’s plan.

THE ANGELUS

A beloved but lesser-known prayer of our Catholic faith is the “Angelus,” a Latin word which means “angel.” The prayer is in the form of three verses and responses which repeat the dialogue of the Archangel Gabriel with the Blessed Virgin Mary at the Annunciation (Luke 1), each of which is followed by the recitation of the *Hail Mary*.

The custom of praying the Angelus three times during the day (at 6 am, noon, and 6 pm) included the ringing of the Angelus



Bell which called people to take time out of their busy workdays to pray. This custom has its roots in the great monastic traditions of the Benedictines and the piety of the Franciscans dating back at least to the 11th

century in its current form. The prayer especially reminds us of the Incarnation of our Lord and the roles of the angels and Our Lady in the work of salvation.

This prayer is meant to be prayed in groups of two or more with a leader reciting the verse and the others offering the response, however it may be prayed individually with great spiritual benefit to the one who prays.

The Angelus

- V. The Angel of the Lord declared unto Mary,
R. And she conceived of the Holy Spirit. (Hail Mary...)
- V. Behold the handmaid of the LORD.
R. Be it done unto me according to thy word. (Hail Mary...)
- V. And the Word was made flesh.
R. And dwelt among us. (Hail Mary...)
- V. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God.
R. That we might be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray: Pour forth, we beseech Thee, O Lord, Thy grace into our hearts; that we to whom the Incarnation of Christ, Thy Son, was made known by the message of an angel, may by His Passion and Cross be brought to the glory of His Resurrection. Through the same Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

BIBLE BASICS



Exodus 20:12 Honor your father and your mother, that you may have a long life in the land the LORD your God is giving you.

Luke 1:30-31 Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. Behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall name him Jesus.”

Colossians 3:12-13 Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, heartfelt compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, bearing with one another and forgiving one another, if one has a grievance against another; as the Lord has forgiven you, so must you also do.

SPIRITUAL CHALLENGE

In the month of December I challenge all families to make time for the family meal, particularly on Sundays. This challenge includes putting down phones and devices so that you can talk to each other uninhibited by noise and distractions. Try to live Advent in the spirit of Mary and Joseph as they prepare for the Child to come.

- California State Chaplain, Fr. Antony Vazhappilly



The Golden Rule

We're accustomed to thinking about "rules" in a negative way, as limitations on what we want to do, but when we talk about the Golden Rule we must think, instead, of a "ruler" – a measuring rod, a yardstick, a unit of measurement. The Golden Rule is not just another restrictive guideline. It is a standard of measurement. But what exactly does it measure? It measures our own behavior.

"Do to others whatever you would have them do to you. This is the law and the prophets." ~ Matthew 7:12

We need a Golden Rule because we cannot see our own behavior objectively. We judge ourselves by our *intentions* (which we always presume are good, right?) while we judge others by their external actions (behaviors) or by how their actions affect us.

Because of this, God tells us to measure "good" and "bad" behaviors in human relationships by our own basic human need to be treated fairly – not our subjective feelings or intentions. That is the standard for deciding about how we will treat others.

If we don't like something other people do to us, why should we do that same thing to someone else? On the other hand, if we appreciate when someone does something good for us – or if we wish people *would do* certain good things for us – then we should do those same things to others.

If it's good for me...it's probably good for thee. If it's not good for me, chances are my neighbor won't like it either!

– FAITH IN ACTION –

FEATURED PROGRAM

CONSECRATION TO THE HOLY FAMILY PRAYER

Holy Family,
we consecrate ourselves and our family to you.
May we be completely united
in a love that is lasting, faithful
and open to the gift of new life.
Help us to grow in virtue,
to forgive one another from our hearts,
and to live in peace all our days.
Keep us strong in faith, persevering in prayer,
diligent in our work, and generous toward those in need.
May our home, O Holy Family,
truly become a domestic church
where we reflect your example in our daily life. Amen.
Jesus, Mary and Joseph, pray for us!

*[Consecration Prayer composed by Knights of Columbus
Supreme Chaplain, Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore]*

CALENDAR OF FAITH | DECEMBER

DEC 3, <i>Fri</i>	St. Francis Xavier, Priest
DEC 4, <i>Sat</i>	St. John Damascene, Priest and Doctor
DEC 7, <i>Tue</i>	St. Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor
DEC 8, <i>Wed</i>	SSOLEMNITY OF THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF MARY
DEC 9, <i>Thu</i>	St. Juan Diego, Confessor
DEC 11, <i>Sat</i>	St. Damasus I, Pope
DEC 12, <i>Sun</i>	Our Lady of Guadalupe
DEC 14, <i>Tue</i>	St. John of the Cross, Priest and Doctor
DEC 21, <i>Tue</i>	St. Peter Canisius, Priest and Doctor
DEC 23, <i>Thu</i>	St. John Cantius, Priest
DEC 24, <i>Fri</i>	VIGIL OF CHRISTMAS
DEC 25, <i>Sat</i>	CHRISTMAS DAY
DEC 26, <i>Sun</i>	FEAST OF THE HOLY FAMILY (Sunday)
DEC 26, <i>Sun</i>	St. Stephen, First Martyr
DEC 28, <i>Tue`</i>	Holy Innocents, Martyr
DEC 29, <i>Wed</i>	St. Thomas Becket, Bishop and Martyr
DEC 31, <i>Fri</i>	St. Sylvester, Pope

— CATECHISM CONNECTION —



1970 The Law of the Gospel requires us to... put into practice the words of the Lord. It is summed up in the Golden Rule, "Whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them; this is the law and the prophets." The entire Law of the Gospel is contained in the "new commandment" of Jesus, to love one another as he has loved us.

1655 Christ chose to be born and grow up in the bosom of the holy family of Joseph and Mary. The Church is nothing other than "the family of God." From the beginning, the core of the Church was often constituted by those who had become believers "together with all [their] household" (cf. Acts 18:8).

— THE SCHOOL OF SAINTS —



To gather round the Bethlehem grotto contemplating there the Holy Family, enables us to appreciate the gift of family intimacy in a special way, and spurs us to offer human warmth and concrete solidarity in those unfortunately numerous situations which, for various reasons, lack peace, harmony, in a word, lack "family".
~ Pope St. John Paul II

At the end of life we will not be judged by how many diplomas we have received, how much money we have made, how many great things we have done. We will be judged by "I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat, I was naked and you clothed me. I was homeless, and you took me in." ~ St. Ignatius Loyola