

## Our Lady of the Desert Catholic Church



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Padre: Victor C. Yakubu,  
Administrador Parroquial

Padre: Julius Kayiwa, Vicario Parroquial

Confesión el Sábado:  
Por cita en (Español y Inglés)

Rosario el Sábado: Y Letanías de la Santísima  
Virgen María—3:20pm

Misa el Sábado: (Vigilia) / Inglés 4:00 p.m.

Rosario el Domingo: Y Letanías de la Santísima  
Virgen María— 9:40am

Misa el Domingo: Español /10:00 a.m.

### Liturgia en los Días de la Semana

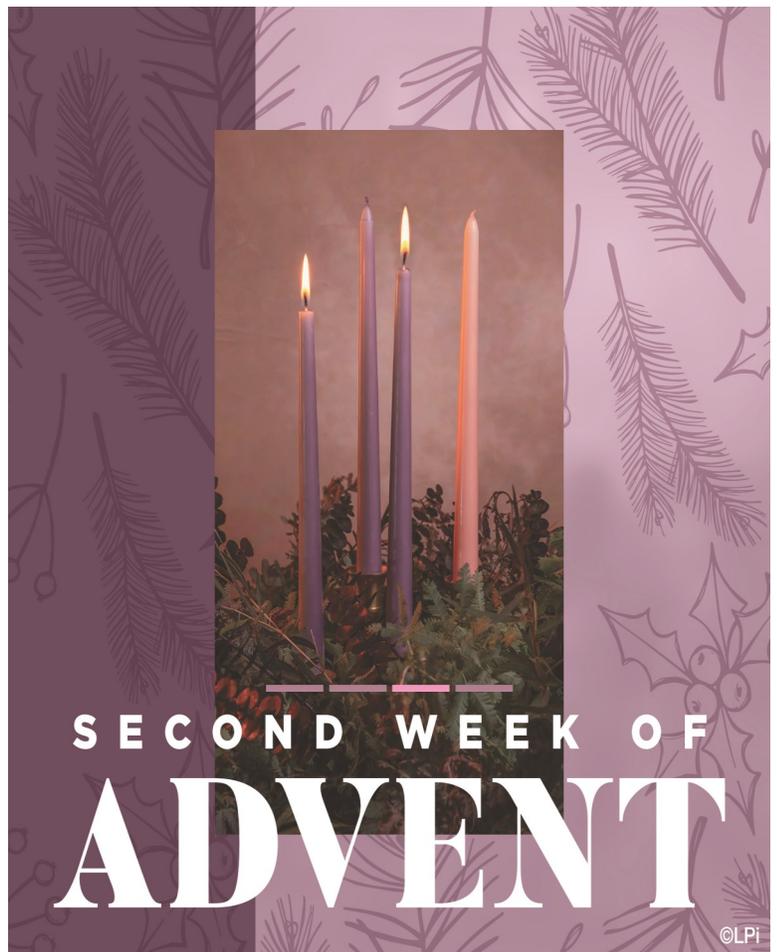
Cada Día a las Doce: Angelus/Regina Caeli

Lunes: Adoración 7:00am y Misa a las 7:30am

Martes, Miércoles Jueves, Viernes:  
Adoración 7:30am y Misa 8:00am

Viernes: a las 6:00pm Rosario Reina de la Paz con  
Adoración

Sábado: Adoración: 7:30am y a las 8:00am  
Misa en Honor de Virgen María



## December 4th, 2022

Rev. Victor C. Yakubu, Parochial Administrator  
Rev. Julius Kayiwa, Parochial Vicar

### Confession on Saturday:

By appointment English/Spanish

**Saturday Rosary:** With Litanies of the Blessed Virgin  
Mary - 3:20pm

**Saturday Mass (Vigil):** English -4:00 p.m.

**Sunday Rosary:** With Litanies of the Blessed Virgin  
Mary—9:40am

Sunday Mass: Spanish 10:00am

### Liturgy of the Weekdays

Every day at Noon: Angelus/Regina Caeli

**Monday:** 7:00am Adoration & Mass 7:30am

**Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday:**  
Adoration 7:30am & Mass 8:00am

**Friday:** At 6:00pm Rosario of Queen of Peace with  
Adoration

**Saturday:** Adoration: 7:30 a.m. & 8:00 a.m. Mass  
In Honor of the Virgin Mary

Repentance and Preparation

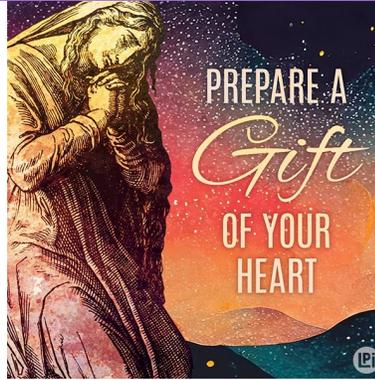
Br. John-Marmion Villa

“I had gone a-begging from door to door in a village path, when thy golden chariot appeared in the distance like a gorgeous dream, and I wondered who was this King of all Kings! My hopes rose high and me-thought my evil days were at an end, and I stood waiting for alms to be given unasked and for wealth scattered on all sides in the dust. The chariot stopped where I stood. Thy glance fell on me and thou camest down with a smile. I felt that the luck of my life had come at last! Then, of a sudden, thou didst hold out thy right hand and say, “What hast thou to give to me?” Ah, what a kingly jest it was to open thy palm to a beggar to beg! I was confused, and stood undecided, and then from my wallet I slowly took out the least little grain of corn and gave to thee. But how great my surprise when at the day’s end, I emptied my bag on the floor to find the least little gram of gold among the poor heap. I bitterly wept and wished that I had the heart to give thee my all.”  
— Rabindranath Tagore

Tagore’s poem about a beggar might seem “nice” at first glance, the story of an unlikely exchange with a traveling king and a village beggar, which left the latter in tears at his home. But this story can help us understand today’s Gospel during Advent.

The story of John the Baptist is familiar to all of us: the cousin of Jesus, dressed rather haggardly, preaching and baptizing before the Messiah. But we might have glossed over one simple line in today’s text which might be likened to the proverbial record-scratch at a poignant moment, “Produce good fruit as evidence of your repentance” (v. 8). How, during the merriment of the ‘most wonderful time of the year,’ do we do this?

The word “repentance” is rendered *μετάνοια* (*metanoia*) in Greek and means “a change of mind.” Many of us might not realize that the liturgical season of Advent is also a penitential season. In our monastic community, we liken Advent to Lent, but with some sugar sprinkled on top!! It is certainly difficult to sense a penitential liturgical season amidst the rampant consumerism during the season. Precisely for this reason do the Church’s penitential seasons prepare us for a solemn celebration of our faith. Advent prepares us for Christmas, just like Lent prepares us for Easter. The preparations involve repentance of some kind.



The prophet’s words that stung the hearts of his listeners should also sting our hearts today. What is the good fruit that can evidence our repentance — a sign of our effort making preparations — during Advent so that we can experience a deeper

immersion into the mystery of Jesus’ incarnation that we will celebrate on December 25 and throughout the Christmas liturgical season?

We know that the real merriment of Christmas is not in receiving gifts, but in giving them, and watching our loved ones delight in our present. And yes, we know about the ultimate gift that Jesus gives to us in becoming human ... hence, the reason for the season ... he who is the only gateway for us to become who we really are meant to be. So, if Jesus himself is his gift to us — and we do indeed delight in that gift of himself — what gift will we give to Jesus in return this Christmas? And will it delight him?

Would it be a mere “little grain of corn”— the meager response of miserly beggar — to a divine request for alms, who, even in his poverty, thought it generous to give from the insignificance of his pocket rather than from wealth of his heart?

We know that nine months before Jesus’ birth, the Blessed Mother gave her fiat in response to the angel’s invitation, a gift of total surrender to the divine will. We also read that a few days after Jesus’ birth, three wise men and their entourage come from the East, having traveled many miles for quite some time, bearing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. All of these are costly gifts, indeed. Perhaps, our experience of preparations (i.e., *metanoia*, or repentance) this Advent could produce a good fruit that will indeed delight the Baby Jesus. I don’t think Baby Jesus wants some gift that can be bought online or from a store, but rather, a comfortable space in the manger of your heart where he can rest his head this season. What interior preparations will you undertake — as costly as they may be — to prepare a suitable place for the Christ Child to lay his sweet head?

— Br. John-Marmion Villa

# WEEKLY PRAYER

## READINGS FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 4, 2022

- Sunday:** Is 11:1-10/Ps 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17/Rom 15:4-9/Mt 3:1-12
- Monday:** Is 35:1-10/Ps 85:9ab and 10, 11-12, 13-14/Lk 5:17-26
- Tuesday:** Is 40:1-11/Ps 96:1-2, 3 and 10ac, 11-12, 13/Mt 18:12-14
- Wednesday:** Is 40:25-31/Ps 103:1-2, 3-4, 8 and 10/Mt 11:28-30
- Thursday:** Gn 3:9-15, 20/Ps 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4/Eph 1:3-6, 11-12/Lk 1:26-38
- Friday:** Is 48:17-19/Ps 1:1-2, 3, 4 and 6/Mt 11:16-19
- Saturday:** Sir 48:1-4, 9-11/Ps 80:2ac and 3b, 15-16, 18-19/Mt 17:9a, 10-13
- Next Sunday:** Is 35:1-6a, 10/Ps 146:6-7, 8-9, 9-10/Jas 5:7-10/Mt 11:2-11

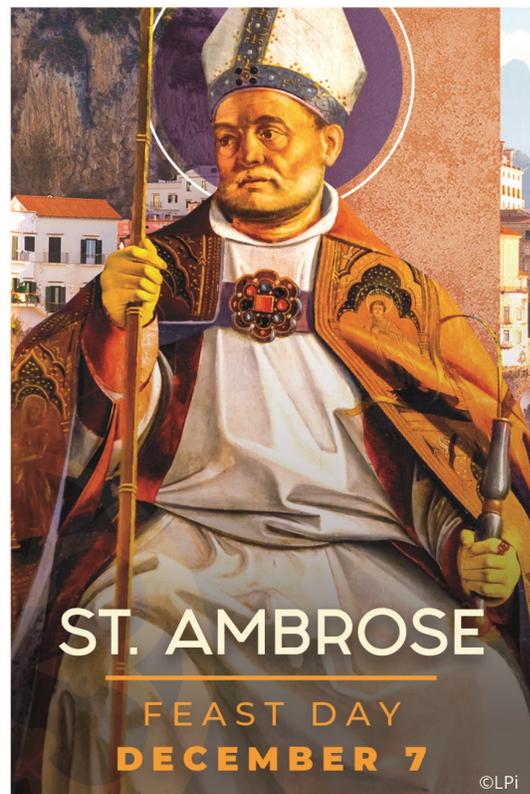
## OBSERVANCES FOR THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 4, 2022

- Sunday:** 2nd Sunday of Advent; St. John Damascene, Priest and Doctor of the Church
- Tuesday:** St. Nicholas, Bishop
- Wednesday:** St. Ambrose, Bishop and Doctor of the Church
- Thursday:** The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- Friday:** St. Juan Diego Cuauhtlatoatzin
- Saturday:** Our Lady of Loreto
- Next Sunday:** 3rd Sunday of Advent; St. Damasus I, Pope

## LIVE THE LITURGY

### Inspiration for the week

The God in whom we believe is “the God of endurance and encouragement.” Have you ever thought about God in those terms? Our sight can become limited by the concerns of the world and our individual lives. We can look to the past and see what is happening in the present, but the future is primarily left to our imaginations. God has a clear vision for the future. It is one where the “wolf shall be a guest of the lamb and the leopard shall lie down with the kid.” It is a vision of harmony and gentleness where all will live as one. We can see the complete picture of life in God. We see what we may be, what may come, and who we can become. Preparing the way for the Lord means moving beyond the limitations of ideology, time, space, preference, and self-focused concern so that we can see as God sees. God will give us what we need to endure whatever comes, and the encouragement we need to get where we can be.



### SAINT OF THE WEEK

Saint Ambrose was born to an aristocratic Roman Christian family in 339 in what is now Trier, Germany. One popular legend tells of a swarm of bees alighting on the infant Ambrose's face and leaving behind a drop of honey which his father took as a sign that Ambrose would be an eloquent speaker with a 'honeyed tongue.'

Ambrose was educated in law and rhetoric in Rome. Like his father, he went into public service and was made governor of Liguria and Emilia about 373. In the second year of his governorship, he went to moderate the election of the bishop of Milan because the heretical Arians were challenging the succession. Unbaptized and untrained in theology, Ambrose was called by popular acclamation to be bishop. Though he attempted to flee, he was found and within a week he was baptized, ordained, and consecrated bishop on December 7, 374.

As bishop Ambrose studied scripture and the writings of Church fathers, he gave his property and wealth to the poor, and became an impactful orator, hymn writer, and renowned teacher. He highly praised consecrated virginity, likely influenced by his sister who took the veil. A contemporary with St. Martin of Tours, he also defended the faith against the Arian heresy (which questioned Christ's divinity), and against the state. Ambrose required Emperor Theodosius do public penance after the massacre of Thessalonica. His classic education contributed to his writing and sermons which attracted and converted Saint Augustine of Hippo who Saint Ambrose baptized.

Saint Ambrose is one of four original doctors of the Church. He died in 397 in Milan, Italy. His remains can be seen today at the Basilica di Sant'Ambrogio, where he lays with Saint Gervasius and Saint Protasius.

## HOW MUCH IS ENOUGH?

I've got some great news for some of you: Jesus Christ doesn't care what name you bear. He doesn't care where you were born, and he doesn't care what your family tree looks like. He doesn't care where you grew up or where you went to school.

I've also got some bad news for some of you: See above.

It's so easy to take our salvation for granted. The mercy of God makes it so. Look at John the Baptist — he was pouring water on everybody who wanted it. Everybody but one group: those who expected it. Those who thought it was a given because of who they were, because of what they were. Those who had no intention of doing the work of repentance.

Sometimes, because God is so faithful, we make the mistake of forgetting that He is also just.

*I am baptized, we think. I made my First Communion, and I was Confirmed. That's enough.*

*I went to Catholic school. I know all the Ten Commandments and I can tell you anything you want to know about the Popes. That's enough.*

*I'm on parish council. I put money in the basket, and I volunteer. That's enough.*

None of it is enough. It would never be enough. And before we look upon the Pharisees and Sadducees with too much judgment, we need to remember: the work of repentance is ongoing. It is a process that we must commit to within ourselves, continuously.

God is the missing element to this equation. He is the one who raises children to Abraham from the stones. If we rely only on our own abilities, our own merits, our own offerings, it will never be enough.

—Tracy Earl Welliver, MTS

## WHY DO CATHOLICS MAKE THE SIGN OF THE CROSS?

The sign of the cross is a devotional practice that dates back to the first Apostles. When making the sign of the cross, we remember Jesus Christ who died for us and also bear witness to the fact that we belong to him and are called to share the Good News to all the world. At our Baptism, we were signed with a cross and marked for Christ. That mark remains on us throughout the entirety of our lives. We remind ourselves of that mark every time we make the same gesture over our bodies. We also remind ourselves that to be a Christian means we are to “put on Christ” and be Christ for a world that needs to know him. In a way, this devotional gesture covers us with Christ so that others may see him in us.

Catholics are not the only ones who make the sign of the cross. Orthodox, Lutheran, and Anglicans are examples of other Christians who maintain this same ancient tradition.





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