



CHURCH OF SAINT LUKE LENDING LIBRARY

ADVENT 2023 - NEWSLETTER

Our Mission

To provide Christian resources that will spark spiritual growth and development for every St. Luke parishioner.

Our Community Library Policies

Our Lending Library works on the honor system. Choose a book that you are interested in reading, log it out on the sign-out sheet and once read, return the book in the BOOK RETURN basket.

- Books can be signed out for up to a month, but we ask that you return them once read (extended time frame allowed for Lent and Advent book selections).
- Because we are a small library with a limited number of books, we ask that you only take one book out at a time.
- Each book contains a Lending Library bookmark. There is a space at the top of the bookmark where you can write the date that the book should be returned by.
- Please do not underline, highlight or write in the books.

We honor you by providing the best of Catholic reading. Please honor us by returning the books promptly so that they can be shared among all parishioners.

Advent 2023

Imagine You Walked with Jesus - A Guide to Ignatian Contemplative Prayer

by Jerry Windley-Daoust

What would it be like to meet Jesus face to face? To walk with him along the roads and seashores of ancient Palestine, to eat with him, to hear his words, to witness his miracles?

For centuries, Christians have 'walked with Jesus' through the practice of imaginative prayer. In **Image You Walked with Jesus**, you'll learn the method of imaginative prayer developed by St. Ignatius of Loyola five hundred years ago. Then you'll be guided through forty Gospel-based encounters with Jesus, from his birth to his resurrection.

Following Jesus - Finding Our Way Home in an Age of Anxiety

by Henri J. M. Nouwen

At one of the lowest points in his life, Henri Nouwen gave a series of lectures on the importance of following Jesus in an age of anxiety. Drawn from those talks, this new work reveals what sustained Nouwen to remain faithful to the teachings of Jesus and led him to become an icon of compassion and vulnerability. Here he writes eloquently about calling and purpose, fear and hope. And he explains why--with so many choices available to the twenty-first-century seeker--the greatest reward for those looking for spiritual direction is rediscovering Jesus's teaching on love. Along the way, Nouwen offers warm, insightful, practical habits to help readers navigate the narrow, sometimes arduous, but ultimately fulfilling road of conviction and faith.

December's Devotion:

The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

The Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first moment of her conception, by a singular privilege of Almighty God, and in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, our Savior and hers, was preserved from all stain of original sin.

The Pope's Intention for December

For Persons with Disabilities

We pray that people living with disabilities may be at the center of attention in society, and that institutions may offer inclusive programs which value their active participation.

December Dates to Remember

- 12/03/23: St. Francis Xavier-Patron of Missionaries
- 12/06/23: St. Nicholas-Patron of Children, Sailors
- 12/08/23: **Feast of the Immaculate Conception**
Holy Day of Obligation
- 12/09/23: St. Juan Diego-Patron of Florists
- 12/12/23: **Our Lady of Guadalupe**
- 12/13/23: St. Lucy-Patron of Eye Troubles
- 12/14/23: St. John of the Cross-Patron of Mystics
- 12/24/23: **Christmas Eve**
- 12/25/23: **Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord**
Holy Day of Obligation
- 12/26/23: **Feast of the Holy Family**
- 12/27/23: **Feast of St. John the Baptist**
- 12/28/23: **Feast of the Holy Innocents**

Do you know the symbolism of the Advent Wreath?

For many Catholics, Advent Wreaths are a favorite way to celebrate the month of December leading up to Christmas Day. Although Advent Wreaths are very popular, many are not aware of the rich meaning and symbolism embedded in this tradition.



Advent candles readily demonstrate the strong contrast between darkness and light, which is an important biblical image. Human history spanned long ages shrouded in the darkness of sin before our prophesied Savior would finally make his appearance to free us from its dominion. As the Messiah's "Advent" (or "coming") draws nearer another candle is lit, with each candle dispelling the darkness a little more. Thus, the Advent wreath helps us to spiritually contemplate the great drama of salvation history that surrounds the birth of God Incarnate, who comes to redeem the human race and make all things new (Rev. 21:5).

It also reminds us that, as Christians, we're meant to shine the light of Christ in this world. As Jesus tells us, *"You are the light of the world ... let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."* (Matthew 5:14-16)

The Shape: The circular shape of the wreath, without beginning or end, symbolizes God's complete and unending love for us—a love that sent his Son into the world to redeem us from the curse of sin. It also represents eternal life.

The Number: The Advent Wreath traditionally holds four candles which are lit, one at a time, on each of the four Sundays of the Advent season. Each candle represents 1,000 years. Added together, the four candles symbolize the 4,000 years that humanity waited for the world's Savior—from Adam and Eve to Jesus, whose birth was foretold in the Old Testament.

The Color: Violet is a liturgical color that is used to signify a time of prayer, penance, and sacrifice and is used during Advent and Lent. Advent, also called "little Lent," is the season where we spiritually wait in our "darkness" with hopeful expectation for our promised redemption, just as the whole world did before Christ's birth.

Traditionally, each of the four Advent candles have a deeper meaning:

- The **1st Sunday of Advent** symbolizes **Hope** with the "Prophet's Candle" reminding us that Jesus is coming.
- The **2nd Sunday of Advent** symbolizes **Faith** with the "Bethlehem Candle" reminding us of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem.
- The **3rd Sunday of Advent** symbolizes **Joy** with the "Shepherd's Candle" reminding us of the Joy the world experienced at the coming birth of Jesus.
- The **4th Sunday of Advent** symbolizes **Peace** with the "Angel's Candle" reminding us of the message of the angels: "Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men."

You can festively decorate your Advent Wreath with other natural materials that traditionally carry their own Christian symbolism. The use of **evergreens** reminds us of our eternal life with Christ; pointy **holly leaves and berries** represents the crown of thorns from the Passion of Jesus and his Precious Blood; and **pine cones** symbolize Christ's Resurrection.

The Advent Wreath tradition also involves an Advent wreath blessing. The wreath is blessed at the beginning of Advent in a special ceremony, so that throughout the whole four weeks you or your family will be drawn into deeper conversion to Christ through its symbolism and meaning. *(Taken in part from "The Advent Wreath Tradition & Meaning" by Gretchen Filz.)*

What Are the St. Ignatius Spiritual Exercises?

The Spiritual Exercises grew out of St. Ignatius Loyola's personal experience as a man seeking to grow in union with God and to discern God's will. He kept a journal as he gained spiritual insight and deepened his spiritual experience. He added to these notes as he directed other people and discovered what "worked." Eventually Ignatius gathered these prayers, meditations, reflections, and directions into a carefully designed framework of a retreat, which he called "spiritual exercises."

**Join us for an Advent themed reflection and introduction to
The Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius.**

There are 2 sessions for you to choose from:

Mondays at 7:00 p.m. on December 4th & December 11th

Wednesdays at 8:30 a.m. on December 6th & December 13th

See the Bulletin for more information.

